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■Dominique Schnapper:
The Politics of French
Intellectuals

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Rachel Berghash
An Interview with Czeslaw Milosz

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COMMENT

MORAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS

By the time this comment on the violence in the West Bank appears, the situation might have changed. But at the moment certain aspects of the conflict and its effect on public opinion might be noted.

To begin with, no one who isn't in the grip of a militant ideology can fail to be disturbed by the provocations of the Palestinians and the harshness of the Israeli response. This is not a scene easily stomached by peace-loving people who would like to see the Jews and the Arabs, if not embracing each other, at least living in some kind of political accommodation.

Recently, a wave of protest against the Israeli crashdown on the Palestinians has swept over Europe and America. A number of American intellectuals have made individual statements and signed public ones strongly criticizing the Israeli government and proposing certain measures to bring the conflict to an end. Most of the statements deplore the strong methods of the Israelis in trying to put down the Arab demonstrations and call for the Israelis to initiate negotiations, even with the PLO, to find a nonviolent solution. Some of them urge the Israelis to withdraw—unilaterally—from the West Bank to permit the Palestinians to set up their own state. Few consider concretely the Israeli need for military security. And none indicate the means for achieving this security as a result of negotiations. Nor do they mention the fact that the Arabs are opposed to negotiations except under conditions that guarantee support of their demands without regard for those of the Israelis. Clearly, these are one-sided approaches to the problem of the West Bank, and do more to support the widespread condemnation of Israel than to promote a settlement of the conflict.

Of course, intellectuals, even Jewish ones, have never been noted for their political wisdom, especially when they have made public their opinions on practical and topical issues. Nor have they exhibited any particular ability to bring a more balanced and wider perspective to the problems of Israel in relation to the Arabs. And while many of them proclaim their concern over the fate of Israel and its ethical image, it is not at all clear that they know better than the Israelis themselves what the Israeli foreign and domestic policies

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should be. True, the Israelis are divided. But that is one of the difficulties faced by democratic nations. However, the Israelis themselves, unlike their American critics, have to suffer the consequences of this fault. It seems to me that Jewish intellectuals would be better advised to look into the history of the Israeli conflict and the larger forces that make it so difficult to resolve.

I myself have no immediate panaceas, nor do I know of any that have been proposed. At the moment, Secretary Shultz's suggestions are worth considering. But so far he has not met with an enthusiastic response by any of the Arab states or factions—or by Shamir. In any event, Shultz's intervention does not go beyond attempting to bring both sides into meaningful negotiations and to suspend bloody confrontation in the meantime.

The crucial question is what the content of these negotiations should be and what results satisfactory to both sides might be envisaged. As things stand the basic demands of both sides cannot be met. The Palestinians—or rather the PLO, since we do not know what the Palestinians would accept—are demanding a sovereign state on the West Bank. The Israelis fear that a Palestinian state would make it infinitely more difficult to defend Israel against an Arab attack because such a state would eat deeply into Israeli territory and could become a military base armed by the Arab countries and perhaps the Russians. On the other hand, the Palestinians appear to find the Israeli occupation intolerable (though it is not clear, as I have suggested, how much of their seemingly uncompromising militancy is fomented from outside). In addition, a good deal of Israeli internal opposition to the occupation stems from the belief that Israel will lose its own character and integrity if it continues to rule over the Palestinians. As Aharon Apelfeld said recently in an interview with Philip Roth, Jews are specialists in self-criticism.

It also has been proposed that Israel should risk the military disadvantages of a Palestinian state: after all, it is argued, Israel was able to beat off the Arab invaders in 1967 when it did not occupy the West Bank. One can understand Israel's reluctance to take such a gamble, for, as everyone knows, Israel cannot risk a single defeat without possibly inviting another holocaust in the Mideast. If such a solution should be considered, it is up to the Israelis and not to its critics to press for it.

What is left? There seem to be only two other possibilities. One is the much talked of plan to incorporate the West Bank into Jordan,

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which neither the Palestinians nor Jordan are pushing. The other is for Israel to permit an autonomously ruled Palestinian territory without an army or military advisors from either the Arabs or the Russians. This would seem to be a possible compromise. But there are no signs that such a solution would be acceptable to the PLO, which, as I've said, so far has not been challenged as the spokesman for the Palestinians. But even if such a plan were accepted, how would it be enforced? By the Israeli army? And if the new territory—or state—were to be armed by the Arab countries and the Soviet Union, presumably the Israelis would be involved in another war—and history would have to repeat itself, perhaps with even more bloodshed.

These are the practical measures any Israeli government must consider. But they represent only the current phase of the historic conflict between the Jews and the Arabs. The rioting of the Palestinians are not the demonstrations of a national minority within the borders of Israel, demanding its civil rights—such as are the recent protests, for example, of the Armenians within the Soviet Union. It is the latest development in the state of war that has existed between the Arabs and the Jews since the founding of Israel in 1947. And though no person not driven by hate wants to see Arabs killing Jews or Jews beating or killing Arabs, berating either side for its behavior will not of itself put an end to the periodic outbreaks of bloodshed. For they have their roots in the refusal of the Arabs, who are still at war with Israel, to grant it not only a measure of security but the very right to exist. (There are reports that Arafat would give Israel the right to exist, but they are inconclusive.) Obviously, given the lineup of the forces stacked against it, Israel will have to make some compromises to try to live in peace with the Arabs. But proclamations, particularly by American intellectuals, that Jews have to uphold the highest standards of political morality, even in wars when their existence is at stake, express more than anything else the need to cope with anti-Semitism carried over from the worst years of the Diaspora. In the past, in order to survive, Jews had to be smarter, more resourceful, more ethical, more cautious, more sensitive, more caring, better behaved, and more concerned with public opinion, especially hostile opinion. Now, fortunately or unfortunately, Israelis were bound to add the qualities of determination and forcefulness, which go with having an army and police and all the things to do with the defense of the country, to the traditional respect for the moral law.

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We can only hope that self-interest, if not reason, will prevail on both sides. But given the complexity of the situation, and the various and conflicting motives of the different Arab groups, a solution that probably will involve an exchange of territory by the Israelis for some guarantee of peace by the Palestinians and the neighboring Arab countries might require a cooling-off period and long negotiations. And the clamor for a quick solution and for immediate and one-sided concessions by Israel prior to negotiations is not only utopian but can only stiffen the resistance of the Palestinians to substitute negotiations for violence and to accept a territorial or some other form of compromise.

W.P.

P.S. On March 16th, an ad appeared in *The New York Times* with a number of signatures calling for an end to the occupation but with assurances of security for Israel. Some of the signers had never expressed any interest in Israel before. And I was sorry to see that some people who are concerned about the fate of Israel had signed a statement that can have little bearing on the situation. For it simply asserted what everyone accepts: that peaceful negotiations should take place, with each side recognizing the needs of the other side, though the burden of negotiation is placed on Israel and not on the Palestinians.

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FICTION

Amos Oz

BLACK BOX

Dear Alec,

From Zikhron I traveled on to Haifa. A strong, strange smell, a heady mixture of pine resin and Lysol, pervaded the sanatorium on Mount Carmel. From time to time the moan of a ship's siren floated up from the harbor. Trains hooted and fell silent. The gardens lay in rustic tranquillity shrouded in gentle sunlight. A couple of old women were dozing on a bench, shoulder resting on shoulder, like a pair of stuffed birds. An Arab male nurse who was pushing a patient in a wheelchair slowed as I passed and eyed me lasciviously. From a corner of the garden rose the croaking of frogs. And in an arbor of thick vines I finally found your father, sitting alone at a white-painted metal table, with his shock of prophetic white hair waving slightly in the breeze, his unkempt Tolstoyan beard flowing down over a stained dressing gown, his face brown and shriveled like a dried fig, with a teaspoon in his hand and a cake on a plate and a half-finished glass of yogurt on the table in front of him. The blue eyes sailing away toward the blue of the sea. His deep, calm breathing stirring the spray of oleander that he was fanning himself with.

When I pronounced his name he deigned to turn and look at me. He rose slowly, majestically, from his seat and bowed to me twice. I held out a bunch of chrysanthemums I had bought at the Central Bus Station. He handed me his oleander spray, drew the chrysanthemums to his chest, carefully inserted one of them into the buttonhole of his dressing gown, and unhesitatingly planted the rest of the bunch in his yogurt glass. He called me Madame Rovina, and thanked me for finding the time to come to his funeral and even bringing flowers.

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I laid my palm on the back of his broad hand, which was crisscrossed with a fascinating network of delicate blue blood vessels and blotched with patches of brown pigmentation, like a landscape of rivers and hills, and asked him how he was. Your father fixed me with his hard, piercing eyes, and his enchanting face darkened. Suddenly he chuckled as though he had seen through my little scheme but had decided to forgive me. Then he turned serious, frowned, and demanded that I tell him if there is any pardon for Dostoevsky; how was it possible that such a man of God "could beat his wife all through the winter and then get drunk and play cards like a beast while his baby is dying?"

Here he was apparently shocked at his own bad manners. He snatched the chrysanthemums out of the yogurt glass, hurled them disgustedly over his shoulder, pushed the glass toward me, and asked me if I would care for some champagne. I raised the glass to my lips—there were petals and dust floating on the murky liquid—and pretended to take a sip. Meanwhile your father wolfed down the remains of his cake. When he had finished it I took out a hankie and brushed the crumbs from his beard. He responded by stroking my hair and declaiming in tragic tones: "The wind, *krassavitsa,* the autumn wind, all day long stealing into gardens. Ho, and its conscience is not clear! It knows no rest! Banished! And in the night they start to ring the big bells. Soon snow will be falling, and we—*dayosh!*—will ride on." Here he lost his way. He fell silent. He gaped slightly, with a cloud of sadness on his face.

"And your health is all right, Volodya? The pains in your shoulder have gone?"

"Pains? Not me! I don't have pains—he does. I heard tell that he's alive, that he talked on the radio even. If I was in his place I would marry a wife and immediately make her have a dozen babies."

"Whose place, Volodya?"

"You know, that little fellow, whats-his-name. That one. The little brother. Binyomin. The one who used to wander around in front of the Arab village of Budrus with the first flock of sheep from the settlement. Binyomin, they used to call him. Described to the life in Dostoevsky! Even truer than he was in *realia*! I was in *realia* also, but as a swine. We had another one there—Sioma. Sioma Axioma, we used to call him. He was one in million. Not one ounce of swine in him. He came from my hometown. Shirky. Minsk Region. *Realia* could not forgive him, and it killed him with love for woman. He took his own lovely soul with my revolver. Could I do something to

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stop him? Had I the right to? Would you offer him, dear lady, one goblet of woman's love? He would repay you with crimson and turquoise. Generously he would repay you. His soul for one single goblet! Half? Quarter? No? Well, then! Never mind. It is not necessary. Do not give. Every human being is—one planet. There's no way through. Just twinkling far away whenever there are no clouds. *Realia* itself is swine. May I offer you one flower? In memory of that poor miserable one. One flower for ascent of his soul? Dostoevsky killed him, with my revolver. Anti-Semite he was! Despicable! Epileptic! He crucifies Christ at least twice on every single page, and still he accuses us. He beats the Jews murderously. And perhaps he is right, dear lady? I am not talking about Palestine. Palestine is—another song. What is Palestine? *Realia?* Palestine is dream. Palestine is *cauchemar,* but still is dream. Perhaps you have deigned to hear of Lady Dulcinea? Well, Palestine is like her. In the dream, myrrh and frankincense, but in *realia* swinery! Misery of swines. And in the morning—'behold it was Leah!' What Leah? Malaria. Ottoman Asia. I was just little boy, little boy catching sparrows. I used to sell them two for a kopeck. I loved to wander by myself on the steppe. So: dreamily strolling in the meadows. And all around—terror! Forests! And muzhiks, with, whatdyacallem, not boots—leggings. That is our Palestine back in Shirky. The stream is Palestine too. And I can swim in it. And one day, there am I as young boy wandering between forest and meadow, and suddenly right in front of me out of the ground up pops little peasant girl. With braid. A swineherd, begging your pardon. Maybe fifteen years old. Well, I don't ask her how old she is. Up she pops and without a word she starts to hoist up—begging pardon—her skirt. And beckoning with her finger. Not one goblet of woman's love—one whole river. Take and it shall be given to you. And I am only young stripling, my foolish blood boiling, and my brain—begging his pardon—fast asleep. Would I lie to you, madame, in the middle of my own funeral? No. Lying is totally contemptible. All the more so before open grave. In short, I do not deny, my dove, I lay hands on her in that field. And for that sin I am sent to Ottoman Asia. 'Flow on, Jordan . . . . ' My father himself smuggles me out in middle of night, so they will not hack me to death. And there, in Palestine—wilderness! Graveyard! Fear! Foxes! Prophets! Bedouins! And the air all ablaze! Take another sip; it will do you good. Drink; to memory of women's love. On the way, when I am still on ship, I throw my tefillin straight in sea. Let fishes eat and grow fat. And I

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will explain this to you also: Short while before we reach city of Alexandria. I have one big row with God. Both of us screaming at each other half the night there on the deck. Maybe we overdo it. What does He want from me? That I should be his little *zhid.* And that's all. Whereas I for my part, I want to be one great swine. And so we quarrel, until comes the night watchman and kicks both of us off that deck in middle of the night. That is how He loses me and I lose Him. Such a secondhand, grumpy, sour God. So. He stayed up there all alone like a dog muttering in his mustache, and I stay down here, one swine among swines. And so we part. And what do I do? *Na,* tell me what I do with the gift of life? What do I spend it on? Why do I sully it? I smash teeth, I cheat, I steal, and, above all, I hoist up skirts. Filthy swine in every way. And now, begging your pardon, dear lady, it is not quite clear to me why you deigned to come and see me today. Are you sent by Binyomin? He has been horribly punished. And who by? By the fair sex! Only because he was such a nonswine. They broke his heart as their pleasure but they did not let him beat a path to their bodies. Even before the shadow of a touch he would faint with embarrassment. So much he suffered that his pure soul departed. And by means of my own revolver! Is madame maybe familiar with the location of the city of Simferopol? There was a terrible battle there. The boys were dying like flies. And who does not die loses God. Does not know what is up and what is down. Gives up God for the sake of women's love, but women they do not find. Women in the Land of Israel are rare then. Perhaps five or six between Rosh Pina and Kastina. Perhaps ten, if you count Baba Yagas. But a *barishnya*—not to be found. The boys, after the discussions, they lie down to each one on his mattress and they dream of brothel of Odessa. And this because God tricks us. He never comes to Ottoman Asia. He stays behind in attic of synagogue in Shirky, lying there and waiting that Messiah should come. In Land of Israel there is no God and there is no love of women. So everybody gets screwed up. And those that go under bridal canopy? Well, of course, in the morning—behold it is Leah. They are ringing the village bells again far away in the distance. Soon it will start to snow, and we will ride on our way. Can the good lady understand me? Can she pardon me? Forgive me? She is alone and I am alone in that field, and she hoists up her skirts and with her little finger she beckons to me and I lay my hands on her. Therefore I am smuggled to Zion. I am first Jew to extract honey from bees. First, since Bible times. Malaria passes me over and I hoist up skirts, like a demon! I

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am first Jew to hoist up skirts in Palestine since Bible times. Assuming Bible is not legend. For that I am punished in Simferopol. One horse falls on top of me and breaks my legs. In Tulkarem they blow off my head. I get them in the teeth. Much blood spilled. Does madame know? My life is no life at all. Great tearfulness I have until day of my death. And yet once I also loved a woman. Even I forced her to go under bridal canopy with me. Although her heart did not desire me. Perhaps she desired some poet? Whereas I—how should I put it?—from navel up I was in love, singing serenades, offering handkerchiefs and flowers, but from navel down a swine from the land of swine. Hoisting skirts left and right in fields. And she, my beloved, my wife, she sat all day long at her window. She had little song: 'Yonder, where the cedars grow . . . .' Do you happen to know this song? Permit me to sing it in your honor: 'Yonder, where the ce-dars grow . . . .' Beware of these songs, dear lady. They are written by angel of death. And she, on purpose to punish me, she ups and dies on me. Just to be contrary. She leaves me and goes up to God. She does not know that He is one swine also. She jumps out of frying pan into fire. Give me your hand. Let us be off. The watch is ended. The Jews built themselves a land. It is not the right land, but they built it anyway! It is all askew, but they built it anyway! Without God—but they built it anyway! Now let us wait and see what God has to say about it all. Well, that is enough now: two kopecks I should give you for your sparrows? Two. More than that I will not pay. My whole life has been battle and defilement. I soiled the gift. Skirts and punched teeth. So why should I give you money? What have you done with your own gift of life? One flower I will give you. One flower and one kiss on the lips. Do you know what is my secret? I have never had anything. And what about you? What brings you to me? What have I done to deserve this honor?"

When he finally stopped and his eyes roamed from me toward the view of the bay fading in the blaze of sunset, I asked him if there was anything he needed. If he wished me to see him back to his room. Or to fetch him a glass of tea.

But he only shook his magnificent head, and muttered: "Two. More than that I will not pay."

"Volodya," I said, "do you remember who I am?"

He withdrew his hand from mine. His eyes brimmed with tears of sadness. No, to his shame he had to confess that he could not

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remember, that he had omitted to inquire who the lady was and why she had asked if he would agree to see her. So I settled him back in his chair, kissed him on the forehead, and told him my name.

"Of course," He smiled with childlike cunning. "Of course, you are Ilana. My son's widow. At Simferopol they were all killed. Not one of them was left alive to observe the beauty of the fall. Soon the snow will start and we—*dayosh!*—we shall ride on. Out of this vale of tears! Away from rotting generals who drink and play cards while the women are dying. And who are you, my lovely lady? What is your name? And your business? Abusing the male sex? And for what purpose did you request that I should grant you an audience? Wait! Do not tell me! You came about the gift of life. Why did we defile it? Why did we curdle our mother's milk? You may have done, madame, but not me. Me, my revolver—down the drain. I threw it away and that is the end of that. So, may God be with us, and may we rest in peace. *Liu liu liu.* Is that one cradle song? Or deathbed song? So, be off with you now. Go. Only this do for me: Live and hope. That is all. Look at the beauty of the fall in the forest before the snow. So? Two kopecks and that is all? I shall even give you three."

With these words he rose, bowed low before me, or rather bent down and picked up one of my chrysanthemums, dirty with dust and yogurt, and delicately proffered it to me: "Only do not get lost in the snow."

And without waiting for an answer or saying good-bye he turned his back and strode toward the building, as upright as an old Red Indian. My audience was at an end. What more was there for me to do but to pick up my sticky chrysanthemums, put them in the trash can, and take the bus back to Jerusalem?

The last of the daylight was still glimmering in the west between serrated clouds on the sea horizon as I sat on the half-empty bus on my way back from Haifa. The memory of his brown hand, gnarled like a volcanic slope, would not leave me: how like yet unlike your own stiff, square hand. I had an almost tangible feeling that his hand was resting on my knee all the way from Haifa. And I found its touch consoling. When I got home, at quarter to ten in the evening, I found Michel asleep on a mattress at the foot of Yifat's bed, fully dressed and with his shoes on. His glasses had slipped onto his shoulder. I woke him in alarm and asked what had happened. It transpired that in the morning, after I had left, when he had dressed Yifat and was on the point of taking her to the nursery, on a sudden

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suspicion he had taken her temperature, and it turned out he was right. So he decided to call and cancel at the last minute the meeting he had arranged with the deputy minister of defense, a meeting for which he had been waiting for almost two months. He took Yifat to the clinic and waited for an hour and a half before the doctor examined her and pronounced that she had "a slight ear infection." On the way home he stopped at the pharmacy and bought some antibiotics and ear drops. He made her some chicken soup and mashed potatoes. By cajoling and bribery he managed to get her to drink some warm milk and honey every hour. At midday her temperature rose, and Michel decided to call a private doctor. Who confirmed his colleague's diagnosis, but charged Michel ninety pounds. He sat till evening, telling her one story after another, and then he managed to make her eat a little chicken and rice and afterwards he sang to her, and when she was asleep he went on sitting beside her in the dark with his eyes closed, measuring her breathing with his stopwatch and singing hymns. Then he dragged a mattress in for himself and lay down at the foot of her bed in case she coughed or her bedclothes fell off while she was asleep. Until he fell asleep too. Instead of thanking him, admiring his devotion, kissing him and undressing him and making it up to him in our bed, I asked irritably why he hadn't telephoned for help to one of his innumerable female in-laws or cousins. Why had he canceled his appointment with the deputy minister? Was it really just to make me feel guilty for going away? Was any means justified to cause guilt feelings? What the hell made him think that he deserved a hero's medal just for spending a single day in the home that I was stuck in for the whole of my life? And why did I have to report to him on where I had been? I wasn't his maid. And while we were on the subject, it was high time he realized how I despised the way the male members of his community and his family treated their poor wives. I refused to give him a report on where I had gone and why. (In my blind fury I had overlooked the fact that Michel had not even asked. No doubt he was intending to ask me and tell me off, and I was merely anticipating him.) Michel listened in silence as he made me a salad and poured me a Coke. He switched the water heater on so that I could take a shower if I wanted to. And made our bed. Eventually, when I stopped, he said: "Is that it? Have we finished? Shall we send a dove out to see if the water has subsided? We've got to wake her up at one o'clock to give her her medicine." As he spoke he bent over her and touched her forehead lightly. And I burst into tears.

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In the night, while he slept, I lay awake, thinking of the rhesus monkey which was your own childhood friend inside the fences of the empty estate, and which you and your father dressed as a waiter, with a bow tie, and trained to serve a tray of pomegranate juice. Until one day it bit you in the neck, and you still carry the scar. The Armenian servant was ordered to shoot it, and you dug its grave and wrote an epitaph. And since then you have been alone.

And I thought about the fact that you never asked to hear about my childhood, in Poland and here, and that I was too ashamed to tell you about it. My father, like my husband, was a schoolteacher. We lived in a cramped apartment, whose gloominess even on summer days is engraved on my memory as the gloom of a cavern. There was a brown clock on the wall. I had a brown coat. From the ground floor rose the smell of the bakery. The narrow street was paved with stone, and streetcars ran along it every now and again. At night there was my father's asthmatic coughing fits. When I was five we received a permit to go to Palestine. For seven years we lived in a wooden hut by Nes Ziona. Father got a job as a plasterer in a building cooperative, but he never lost his short-tempered teacherly manner until he was killed falling from a scaffold. My mother died less than a year later. She died of a children's disease, measles, on the festival of the trees. Tu Bishevat. Rahel was sent away to be educated in the kibbutz where she still lives, while I was enrolled in an institution of the Working Women's Council. After that I was a platoon clerk in the army. Five months before I was discharged you were put in charge of the platoon. What was it about you that caught my heart? To try to answer the question I'll write down here for you our son's ten commandments, in random order but in his own words: I. Pity them all. II. Take more notice of the stars. III. Against being bitter. IV. Against making fun. V. Against hating. VI. Bastards are still human beings, not shit. VII. Against beating up. VIII. Against killing. IX. Not to eat each other. X. Cool it.

These halting words are the exact opposite of you. As far as the stars are from a mole. The icy malice that radiated from you like a bluish arctic glow and made the other girls in the battalion hate you to the point of hysteria was what caught my heart. Your air of indifferent mastery. The cruelty that you exuded like a scent. The greyness of your eyes, like the smoke from your pipe. The murderous sharpness of your tongue at any hint of opposition. Your wolfish glee at the sight of the terror you spread. The contempt you could emit like a flamethrower, and shoot like a searing jet at your friends, your

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subordinates, or the gaggle of secretaries and typists who were always petrified by your presence. I was drawn to you as though bewitched from muddy depths of primeval female subservience, ancient servitude from before words existed, the submission of a Neanderthal female whose survival instinct and fear of hunger and cold make her throw herself at the feet of the roughest of the hunters, the hairy savage who will tie her hands behind her back and drag her, captive, to his cave.

I remember the crisp hail of military words that you fired from the corner of your mouth: Negative. Affirmative. Roger. Full stop. Scram.

You delivered this barrage almost without parting your lips. And always on the verge of a whisper, as though you were sparing not only with words but also with the use of your voice and your face muscles. Your predator's jaws, which on rare occasions bared your lower teeth in a bitter, condescending grimace that served you as a smile: "What's going on here, sweetie? Nothing better to do than sit on the stove and warm your holy places at the army's expense?" Or: "If you only had in your head ten percent of what you've got in your bust, Einstein himself would sign up with you for evening classes." Or: "That inventory report you drew up for me looks like a recipe for strudel. Why not write me a report instead about what you're like in bed. Maybe there at least you're good for something?" Sometimes your victim burst into tears. And then you would ponder, look at her as at a dying insect, and hiss: "All right, give her a candy somebody and explain to her that she's just been saved from a court-martial." Then you turned on your heel as though on a spring and slipped pantherlike from the room. And I, driven by a blind impulse, used to provoke you sometimes, despite the danger or because of it. I would say, for example. "Morning, sir. Here's your coffee. Perhaps you fancy a little belly dance with it?" Or: "Sir, if you're really dying to see what I've got underneath my skirt, don't bother to peep, just give me the order and I'll draw up an inventory report for you on everything there is to see there." Every wisecrack of this kind cost me confinement to barracks or loss of leave. Several times you punished me for insolence. Once you made me spend twenty-four hours in the guardroom. Next day—do you remember?—you asked: "Well, have you got rid of your urge, cutie?" I smiled provocatively and answered: "On the contrary, sir. I'm all aflame." Your wolfish jaws gaped as though to bite, and you snarled through your teeth: "Do you want me to teach you what to do in a condition like yours,

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sweetie?" The girls started to snicker. They had giggles behind their hands. And I gave as good as I got: "Should I wait for an order to report, sir?"

Until once, one rainy winter night, you offered me a lift into town. A thunderstorm accompanied the jeep along the coast road, we were battered by sweeping rain, and you subjected me to the ordeal of your icy silence. We drove for half an hour without exchanging two words, our eyes fixed hypnotically on the rhythmic struggle of the windshield wipers against the deluge. Once, the jeep skidded, traced a loop on the road, and without saying a word you managed to regain control of the steering wheel. Twenty or thirty kilometers later you suddenly said: "What's up? You suddenly been struck dumb?" And for the first time I imagined I caught a hint of hesitation in your voice and was filled with childish glee. "Negative, sir. I simply thought you were working out a plan for the conquest of Baghdad in your head and I didn't want to disturb you."

"Conquest, sure, and how! But what's all this about Baghdad? Is that your pet name?"

"Tell me something, Alex, while we're on the subject of conquests. Is it true what the girls say, that you've got a bit of a problem in that department?"

You ignored my daring to call you by your first name. Looking as though you were about to punch me in the face, you turned toward me and hissed: "What problem?"

"You'd better keep your eyes on the road. I don't want to get killed with you. Rumor has it in the platoon that you have a problem with girls? That you've never had a girl friend? Or is it maybe just because you're wedded to your tanks?"

"That's not a problem"—you chuckled in the darkness—"that's the solution."

"Then it might interest you to know that the girls are of the opinion that your solution is our problem. That what we ought to do is pair you off with one of us who will volunteer to sacrifice herself for the sake of the others."

In the half-light of the jeep as it tore through the curtains of rain, by the beat of your foot on the accelerator, I could sense the pallor spreading on your face. "What's going on here?" you asked, struggling unsuccessfully to conceal from me the tremor in your voice. "What is this, a panel discussion on the commanding officers' sex life?"

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And then, at the first traffic light as we entered Tel Aviv from the north, you suddenly asked dejectedly: "Tell me something, Brandstetter, do you . . . really loathe me?"

Instead of replying, I asked you to stop the jeep after the traffic light, and pull off the road. And without another word I drew your head to my lips. As I had already done a thousand times in my imagination. Then, maliciously, I burst out laughing and said that I could see that you really did have to be taught everything from scratch. Because apparently you'd never even managed to kiss. And the time had come to show you which was the butt and which was the trigger. That if you would just give the order, I'd put you on an intensive training course.

And indeed I found you a virgin and clumsy. And stiff. You didn't even manage to pronounce my name without stammering. When I got undressed, you averted your gaze. At least six weeks passed before you allowed me to leave the light on and look at your naked body: slim, youthful, as if your uniform was part of your flesh. You were very strong and timid, and my caresses seemed to tickle you. They made you shudder. The hairs on the back of your neck stood on end whenever I ran my hand up and down your back. Every time I touched your manhood it was as though you got an electric shock. Sometimes in the crux of pleasure I burst out laughing, and you immediately recoiled.

And yet also the wildness of your desperate craving during our first nights, your overwhelming desire, which could not be extinguished but would flare up anew almost as soon as it was gratified. Your orgasms, which were wrenched out of you with a piercing roar, like someone being shot with a hail of bullets. All this set my senses in a whirl. I was unquenchable too.

Every morning, during office hours, my loins would melt at the sight of your taut body in the uniform that you used to starch and press ruthlessly. If my eyes happened on that spot that I tried so hard not to look at, where the zip of your trousers met the buckle of your military belt, my nipples stiffened. Our secret was kept for a fortnight. Then dumbfounded gossip erupted among the secretaries and typists.

Slowly our nights were enriched. How happy I was in my heart of hearts about the experiments I had had before you. You were an eager pupil, and I an enthusiastic teacher. Almost until dawn we used to drink each other like a pair of vampires. Our backs were

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covered with scratches and our shoulders with love bites. In the mornings our eyes were so red from lack of sleep it looked as though we had both been crying. In my little room, at night, between one surge of desire and the next, you used to lecture me in that resonant bass voice of yours about the Roman Empire. About the battle of the Horns of Hattin. About the Thirty Years' War. About Clausewitz, von Schlieffen, De Gaulle. About what you termed the "morphological absurdities" of the Israeli Army. I could not understand it all, but I found a strange fascination in the troop movements, the bugles, the standards, the cries of the dying Romans that you conjured up between my sheets. Sometimes I would climb on top of you in mid-sentence and make your lecture tail off in a grunt.

Then you gave in and agreed to go with me to the theater. To sit in a café with me on a Friday afternoon. Even to go swimming. I went off with you for long weekend trips to remote valleys in Galilee. We slept in your German sleeping bag. Your submachine gun, cocked and in a safe position, was by your head the whole time. Our bodies amazed us. Words hardly existed. If I asked myself what was happening, what you meant to me, what would happen to us, I did not find the shadow of an answer, only my feverish desire.

Until one day—it was after I'd finished my military service, six months or so after the night of the jeep and the lightning, and of all places in the shabby restaurant of the gas station at Gedera—you said to me suddenly: "Let's talk seriously."

"About Kutuzov? About the battle for Monte Cassino?"

"No. Let's talk about us."

"While on the subject of excellence on the battlefield?"

"While on the subject of changing the subject. Be serious, Brandstetter."

"Yes, sir," I said, as though teasing, and suddenly, belatedly noticed a tormented film over your eyes, I said: "Has something happened, Alec?"

You shut up. For a long while you eyed the cheap plastic salt shaker. Then, without looking at me, you said that you did not think you were "an easy man." Perhaps I tried to answer, but you laid your hand on top of mine and said: "Give me a moment, Ilana, don't interrupt. This is difficult for me." I said nothing. And you fell silent again. At the end of your silence you said that you lived "all your life apart, in the inner meaning of the word." You asked whether I understood. You asked what I could see in "such a . . . stiff man." Without waiting for an answer you went on hurriedly, with a slight

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stammer: "You're my only friend. Of either sex. And my first. You're also . . . Shall I pour you some beer? Do you mind if I . . . talk a little?" You poured out the rest of the beer for me, absentmindedly drank it yourself, and told me that you intended never to marry. "A family—you know I have no idea how to handle all that. Are you hot? Do you want us to leave?" Your dream was to be a strategist. Or something like a military theoretician. And not in uniform. To leave the army, go back to the university in Jerusalem, take a second and a third degree, "and in fact apart from you, Brandstetter, that is . . . up to the time you raped me . . . girls weren't exactly my territory. Nothing doing. Even though I'm a big boy of twenty-eight. Nothing. That is . . . apart from . . . sexual urges. Which actually gave me quite a lot of trouble. But apart from the urge . . . not a thing. I've never managed to . . . to make friends. Or to study up on romance. As a matter of fact, I haven't even made friends with men particularly. Don't get me wrong. In the intellectual, or professional, area I do have a sort of . . . circle. More or less. A group of like-minded people. But as for emotion and all that . . . it always made me feel pressured. I used to ask myself why I should start having feelings for strangers. Or for strange women. Until I . . . met you. Until you took up with me. The fact of the matter is that even with you I felt under pressure. Only, there's something between us, isn't there? I can't define it. Maybe we're . . . two of a kind."

Then you talked about your plans again: to finish writing your doctoral thesis by 1964, and then work on a theory. War studies. Perhaps something more general, a thesis about violence in history. In all periods. Look for a common denominator. Maybe reach something like a personal solution. That is, a personal solution to a fundamental philosophical problem. So you said, and you continued for a little longer; then suddenly you shouted at the waiter that the place was swarming with flies, you started killing them, and you shut up. You asked for my "reaction."

And I, for the first time with you, used the word *love.* I said to you, more or less, that your sadness was my love. That you had aroused an emotional ambition in me. That you and I, the two of us, perhaps really were two of a kind. That I wanted to have a child with you. That you were a fascinating person. That if you would marry me, I would marry you.

And that was the night, after that conversation in the filling station at Gedera, that your virility let you down in my bed. And you

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fell into a panic and desperate shame such as I have never seen in you ever, either before or since. And as your anxiety and your embarrassment grew, so your organ shrank at my fingers' touch until it was almost swallowed up in its lair, like a little boy's. And I, close to tears of joy, covered your whole body with my kisses and cradled your handsome, crew-cut head all night long in my arms, and I kissed you even in the corners of your eyes, because you were as precious to me that night as you would have been had I given birth to you. Then I knew that we were fused in each other. That we had become one flesh.

It was a few weeks after that that you took me to see your father.

And by the autumn we were married.

Now you tell me this: Why have I written to you about these long-forgotten events? To scratch at old scars? To reopen our wounds for no reason? To decipher a black box? To hurt you all over again? To arouse your longings? Perhaps this too is a scheme to catch you once again in my net?

I plead guilty on all six counts. I know no extenuating circumstances. Except, perhaps for one: I loved you not despite your cruelty; I loved the dragon itself. And those Friday evenings when we used to entertain five or six Jerusalem couples, high-ranking army officers, clever young university lecturers, promising politicians. You used to serve the drinks at the start of the evening, exchange some witticisms with the female partners, and curl up in a corner armchair in the shade of your bookshelves. You followed the political discussion with an expression of suppressed irony, but without participating. As the discussion heated up, the faint wolf grin gradually spread on your lips. You stealthily kept the glasses topped up, and went back to concentrating on filling your pipe. When the discussion was at its height and they were all tearing each other limb from limb, shouting and red in the face, you would choose your moment with the precision of a ballet dancer, and interject softly: "Hold on. I'm sorry. I don't follow that." The hubbub would die down at once and all eyes would fix on you. Lazily drawing out the syllables, you would say: "You're all moving a little too fast for me. I've got a really elementary question." And then you would have shut up. You would concentrate on your pipe for a moment as though you were alone in the room, and then, out of the thick cloud, you would deliver a short Katyusha salvo at your guests. Demanding definitions of the terms they had been using

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carelessly. Laying bare with an icy chisel certain latent contradictions. Drawing in a few sentences some clever logical lines, as though tracing geometrical shapes. Directing a devastating rejoinder to one of the lions in the room, and surprising all of us by backing the opinion of the weakest intellect present. Setting up a compact argument and fortifying it with a preventive bombardment against any possible rejoinder. And concluding, to the general stupefaction, by indicating a possible weak point in your own argument, which no doubt had escaped everyone's notice. In the ensuing silence you would turn to me and command: "Lady, these good people are too shy to tell you that they want some coffee." Then you would start fiddling with your pipe again, as if to say that the break was over and it was time to resume the really serious business. I was enthralled by the frost of your polite ruthlessness. The moment the door closed behind the last departing couple I would wrench your neatly pressed best shirt out of your corduroy trousers and thrust my fingers into your back, into the hair on your chest. Only the following morning would I clear up and wash the dishes.

Sometimes you got in at one o'clock in the morning from maneuvers, from a brigade-level field exercise, from a night vigil of taming some new tank (what were you getting in those days? British Centurions? American Pattons?), with eyes red from the desert dust, powdered bristles on your face, gritty sand in your hair and the soles of your shoes, your salt sweat stiffening the shirt on your back, and yet as brisk and lively as a burglar inside a safe. You would wake me up, demand some supper, take a shower without closing the door and emerge dripping wet because you hated drying yourself. You would sit down in an undershirt and tennis shorts at the kitchen table and devour the bread and salad and the double omelette that I had prepared for you in the meantime. Far from sleep you would put some Vivaldi or Albinoni on the record player. You would pour yourself some cognac or a whisky-on-the-rocks, sit me down in my nightie in an armchair and sink into the chair opposite, put your bare feet up on the coffee table, and start lecturing me with a kind of repressed, derisive rage: denouncing the idiocy of your commanding officers; tearing to pieces the "mentality of the Palmach mob"; sketching the appearance of the theater of war toward the end of the century; thinking aloud about "the universal common denominator" of armed conflicts as such. And suddenly you would change the subject and tell me about some little woman soldier who had tried to seduce you earlier that evening. Interested to know if I was jealous.

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Asking jokingly what I would say if you had allowed yourself to be seduced into "opening a quick packet of field rations." Interrogating me offhandedly about the men I had had before you. Demanding that I grade them "on a scale from one to ten." Curious to learn if it happened that some stranger occasionally caught my fancy. Asking me to give a "stimulation rating" to your superior officers and comrades, our Friday evening guests, the plumber and the greengrocer and the postman. Eventually, at three o'clock in the morning, we would clamber into bed or collapse onto the rug, emitting sparks, my hand on your lips to prevent the neighbors from hearing your roars, your hand on my mouth to muffle my shrieks.

Limp, drowned in pleasure, aching, dizzy with exhaustion, I would sleep next day till one or two in the afternoon. In my sleep I could hear your alarm clock going off at six-thirty. You would get up, shave, take another shower—this time in cold water. Even in the winter. You would get into a clean uniform that I had starched and pressed for you. Swallow some bread and sardines. Gulp down some coffee without even sitting down. And then: the slamming of the door. Your leaping down the steps two by two. The sound of the jeep starting. That's how the game began. The shadow of a third person in our bed. We would conjure up some man who happened to have caught my fancy. And you impersonated him. Sometimes you impersonated both of you, yourself and the stranger. My role was to give myself to you both alternately or simultaneously. The presence of the strange shadows pierced us both with a searing jungle thrill that wrenched from my belly and your chest screams, oaths, pleas, spasms the like of which I have never encountered elsewhere except in childbirth. Or in death.

By the time Boaz was two our hellfire was already burning with a black flame. Our love had filled with hate. Which consumed everything yet continued to masquerade as love. When you discovered that snowy January evening, coming back from the university library with a raging fever, that lighter on the bathroom stool, you were overwhelmed by a lunatic glee. You roared with laughter, like hiccoughs; you punched me until by a battering cross-examination you dragged out of me every detail, every jot and shudder, and without undressing me you fucked me standing up as though knifing me, and during and after you didn't stop interrogating me more and more and again you mounted me on the kitchen table and your teeth dug into my shoulder and you slapped me with the back of your hand, like punishing an unruly horse. So our life began to

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flicker with the glimmer of a will-o'-the-wisp. Your demented fury, whether I was obedient or not, whether I seemed to you sick with desire or whether I seemed indifferent, whether I described what had been done to me or stayed stubbornly silent. You would disappear from home for days and nights on end, shut yourself up in that hole-in-the-wall you rented near the Russian Compound, conquering your doctorate as though taking enemy fortifications by storm; and without warning you used to descend on me at eight o'clock in the morning or three in the afternoon, lock Boaz in his room, extract a detailed confession from me, and exhaust in me the torrent of your lust. Then began the suicides, with tablets and with gas. And your alliance with Zakheim and your savage war against your father and the accursed house in Yefe Nof. Our tropical hell. A parade of dirty towels. Stinking socks of grinning belching men. The reek of garlic and radishes and shish kebab. Hiccoughs from Coca-Cola or beer. Choking on cheap cigarettes. Sourness of sticky lustful male sweat. Their trousers lowered to their ankles, not troubling to take off their shirts; some were even too slovenly to remove their shoes. Their dribble on my shoulders. In my hair. Spunk stains on my sheets. Murmured obscenities and hoarse lascivious whispers. Their lecherous, meaningless endearments. And afterward, the ludicrous search for their underwear, lost in the bedding. The jocular arrogance that descended upon them once their desire was satisfied. The absent-minded yawns. The invariable glance at their watches. Crushing me as though in me they were vanquishing the whole female sex. Like avengers. Or as though they were scoring points on some masculine league table. Or clocking engine hours. Only very rarely there came a stranger who tried to listen to my body and produce a tune. Or a youth who managed to make me feel a fleeting compassion beyond my lasting disgust. And you with your tide of desperate hatred. Until I became repugnant to myself and to you and you divorced me. At the bottom of my make-up drawer I keep a note in your handwriting. Zakheim handed it to me the day of our decree, when the court declared that henceforth we had no claims on one another. You had written down four lines for me from a poem by Alterman: "You are the sadness of my balding head. / The melancholy of my aging claws: / You'll hear me in the plaster of your walls, / And in the nightly creaking of your floors."

That is what you wrote in the courthouse, and sent to me via Zakheim. You did not add a word of your own. For seven whole years. Why have you returned now like a phantom to the window of

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my new life? Go away to your own hunting grounds. Go away to the frost of the stars in your black-and-white spacecraft. Go away and never come back. Not even in dreams. Not even in my body's longings. Not even in the plaster of the walls and the creaking of the floors. Go away from the woodcut and the cowl. Why not cross the snowbound wilderness, knock at the door of the first hut, and ask for light and warmth? Marry your bespectacled secretary. Or any of your admirers. Take a wife and make a home. Make sure there's a real log fire in winter. A little garden. Roses. A dovecote. Perhaps you will have another son, and when you get home from work in the evening you can sit down with him at your black desk, cut out pictures for him from the *Geographical Magazine,* touch his hair and mess it up with gum. Your wife will run her hand over your tired brow. Massage at night your neck muscles, strained from writing and loneliness. You can put a record on. Not Vivaldi or Albinoni—perhaps some pensive jazz. There will be a rainstorm outside. Water rushing in the gutter. From the next room you will catch scents of talcum powder and shampoo, bedtime smells of the child. You will both lie there in your bed, listening to the roar of the wind through the tight-closed window. Each reading a book. Or else you will talk to her, in a whisper, about Napoleon's campaigns. Soon the light will go out and her fingers will start wandering among the curls on your chest. You will close your eyes. Then I shall come too and slip between you like a rustling. And in the darkness you and I will laugh together without making a sound. My genie and my bottle.

It is now almost six o'clock in the morning. I have been writing to you all night. I will have a shower, dress, and make breakfast for my little girl and my husband. There is happiness in the world, Alec, and suffering is not the opposite of it, it is the thorny path along which we have to creep on our bellies to that forest clearing, bathed in a fine lunar silver, which is calling to us and waiting. Don't forget.

Ilana

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Isaac Bashevis Singer

THE MISSING LINE

Toward evening, the large hall of the Yiddish Writers' Club in Warsaw became almost empty. At a table in a corner two unemployed proofreaders played chess. They seemed to play and doze simultaneously. Mina, the cat, had forgotten she was a literary cat written up in the newspapers and went out in the yard to hunt for a mouse or perhaps a bird. I was sitting at a table with the most important member of the club—Joshua Gottlieb, the main feuilletonist of *The Haint.* He was the president of the journalists' syndicate, a doctor of philosophy, a former student of such famous scholars as Hermann Cohen, Professor Bauch, Professor Messer Leon, Kuno Fischer. Dr. Gottlieb was tall, broad-shouldered, with a straight red neck and a potbelly. The setting sun threw a purple shine on his huge bald head. He smoked a long cigar and blew the smoke out through his nostrils. He would not have invited a beginner like myself to his table, but there was no one else available at this hour, and he liked to talk and tell stories.

Our conversation turned to the supernatural and Dr. Gottlieb was saying, "You young men are in a rush to explain everything according to your theories. For you it is theory first and facts last. If the facts don't match the theories, it is the fault of the facts. But a man of my age knows that events have a logic of their own. Above all, they are the product of causality. Your mystics feel insulted if things happen in what we call a natural way. But to me the greatest and most wonderful miracle is what Spinoza called the order of things. When I lose my glasses and then find them in a drawer which I thought I hadn't opened in two years, I know I must have put them there myself and that they were not hidden by your demons or imps. I also know that no matter how many incantations I might have recited to retrieve them, the eyeglasses would have stayed in the drawer forever. As you know, I am a great admirer of Kant, but to me

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causality is more than a category of pure reason. It is the very essence of creation. You may even call it the thing in itself."

"Who made causality?" I asked, just to say something.

"No one, and therein is its beauty. Let me tell you—about two years ago something happened to me which had all the earmarks of one of your miracles. I was absolutely convinced that no explanation of it was possible. Rationalist that I am, I said to myself, 'If this actually happened and it was not a dream, I will have to reappraise everything I learned from the first grade in Gymnasium to the universities of Bonn and Bern.' But then I heard the explanation and it was as convincing and as simple as only the truth can be. As a matter of fact, I thought I would write a story about it myself. However, I don't want to compete with our literati. I guess you know that I don't have too high an opinion of fiction. It may sound like a sacrilege to you, but I find more human fallacies, more psychology, and even more entertainment in the daily press than in all your literary magazines. Does my cigar bother you?"

"Not at all."

"You certainly know—I don't need to tell you—that our typesetters in *The Haint* and in the Yiddish press generally make more errors than all the other typesetters in the whole world. Although they consider themselves ardent Yiddishists, they don't have the slightest respect for their language. I don't sleep nights because of these barbarians. Who was it who said that ninety-nine percent of all writers die not from cancer or consumption but from misprints. Every week I read three proofs of my Friday feuilleton, but when they correct one mistake they immediately make another, and sometimes two, three, or four.

"About two years ago I happened to write an article about Kant, a *jubilieum* of a sort. When it comes to philosophic terms, our typesetters get especially rattled. Besides, the man who makes up the page layout has a tradition of losing at least one line from my feuilleton every time, and I often find it in another article, sometimes even in the news. On that day I quoted a phrase which offered a perfect target for misprints: *The transcendental unity of the apperception.* I knew our typesetters would make mincemeat out of it, but I had to use it. I read the proofs three times as usual, and miraculously the words came out correctly every time. But I uttered a little prayer for the future, just in case. That night I went to sleep as hopeful as a writer in Yiddish can afford to be.

"The papers are brought to me every morning about eight

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o'clock, and Friday is always my crisis day of the week. At first everything seemed quite smooth and I hoped against hope that this time I would be spared. But no, the line with the words *'the transcendental unity of the apperception'* was missing. The whole article became senseless.

"Of course I was angry and cursed all the Yiddish typesetters with the vilest oaths. After an hour of utter resentment and extreme anti-Yiddishism, I began a search for the line in the other articles and news items of our Friday issue. But this time it seemed to have been lost altogether. Somehow this was a disappointment to me. What burned me up more than anything else is that readers, even my friends in the Writers' Club, complimented me and seemed not to have noticed the missing line. I've promised myself a million times not to read *The Haint* on Friday, but you know, there is an element of masochism in each of us. In my imagination I took revenge on the typesetters, the editors, the proofreaders by shooting them, beating them, and making them memorize all my feuilletons since the year 1910.

"After a while, I decided I had suffered enough and began to read *The Moment,* our rival newspaper, to see what their feuilletonist, Mr. Helfman, had written that Friday. Of course I knew beforehand that his piece could not be anything but bad. In all twenty years of our competition, I've never read anything good by this scribbler. I don't know how you feel about him, but to me he is an abomination.

"That Friday, his concoction seemed worse than ever, so I gave up in the middle and began to read the news. I turned to an item with the title 'A Man a Beast,' the story of a janitor who came home from the tavern at night and raped his daughter. Suddenly the most impossible, unbelievable, preposterous thing happened—my missing line was right before my eyes! I knew that it must be an hallucination. However, hallucinations last no longer than a split second. Here the words lingered in black type before me: *the transcendental unity of the apperception* . . . . I closed my eyes, certain that when I opened them again the mirage would have vanished, but when I did there it was—the unthinkable, the ridiculous, the absurd.

"I admit that even while disbelieving in what you call the supernatural, I often toyed with the idea that one day a phenomenon might occur which would force me to lose faith in logic and reality. But that a metal line would fly from the *Haint* composing room at 8 Chlodna Street to the *Moment* composing room at 38 Nelewski—this I certainly did not expect. My son came into the room, and I must

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have looked as if I had seen a ghost, because he said to me, 'Papa, what's the matter?' I don't know why, but I said to him, 'Please, go down and buy me a copy of *The Moment*.' 'But you are reading *The Moment* right now,' my boy said. I told him that I must see another copy. The boy looked at me as if to say, 'The old man is meshugga altogether,' but he went down and bought another copy.

"Sure enough, my line was there on the same page in the same item: 'He came home from the tavern and saw his daughter in bed and *the transcendental unity of the apperception* . . . . ' I was so baffled and distressed that I began to laugh. To be completely on the safe side, I asked my boy to read the whole item out loud. Again he gave me that look which meant 'My father is not all there,' but he read it slowly. When he came to the transposed line, he smiled and asked, 'Is this why you wanted me to buy another copy?' I didn't answer. I knew that no hallucination has ever been shared by two people."

"There are cases of collective hallucinations," I said.

"Anyhow, that Friday and Saturday I couldn't sleep and could barely eat. I decided to go on Sunday morning to speak to the manager of our printing department, my old friend, Mr. Gavza. If there is a man who cannot be fooled by abracadabra and hocus-pocus, it is he. I wanted to see the expression on his face when he saw what I saw. On the way to *The Haint* I decided it would be a good thing to find the manuscript of my feuilleton, assuming it wasn't thrown out. I asked if the copy of my article was still around,and lo and behold, they found it, and the words were there as I remembered them. I was eager to find the solution to this riddle, but I didn't want the solution to be based on some silly blunder, ludicrous misunderstanding, or lapse of memory. With my manuscript in one hand and *The Moment* in the other, I went to see Mr. Gavza. I showed him my manuscript and said, 'Please, read this paragraph.' Before I even finished my sentence he said, 'I know, I know, a line was missing in your feuilleton about Kant. I guess you want to publish a correction. Believe me, no one ever reads them.' 'No, I don't want to publish any corrections,' I said. 'What else brings you here on Sunday morning?' Gavza asked.

"I showed him the Friday *Moment* with the news item and said, 'Now read this.' Gavza shrugged, began to read, and never before have I seen an expression like that on Gavza's quiet face. He gaped at the news item, at my manuscript, at me, at the paper, again at me, and said, 'Am I seeing things? This is your missing line!'

"'Yes, my friend,' I said. 'My missing line has jumped from *The*

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Haint to *The Moment* a dozen streets away, over all the buildings, all the rooftops, and settled down right into their printing room, into this item. Is it possible that demons did the job? If you can explain this . . . . '

"'Really, I cannot believe it,' Gavza said. 'This must be some trick, some kind of practical joke. Maybe someone glued in the line. Let me see it again.'

"'No trick and no glue,' I said. 'This line fell out of my article and appeared in *The Moment* last Friday. I have another copy of *The Moment* in my pocket.'

"'My God, how could this have happened? Gavza asked. Again and again he compared my manuscript with the line in *The Moment.* Then I heard him say, 'If this can happen, anything can happen. Maybe demons really did steal your line from *The Haint* and carry it to *The Moment.*'"

For a long while we stood looking at each other with the painful feeling of two adults who realize that their world has turned to chaos, with logic gone and so-called reality totally bankrupt. Then Gavza burst out laughing. 'No, it wasn't the demons, not even the angels. I think I know what happened,' he exclaimed.

"'Tell me quickly before I burst,' I said.

"And this was his explanation. The Jewish National Fund often publishes an appeal in both *The Haint* and *The Moment*. Sometimes they make changes to adjust the appeal for the readers of the respective newspapers. Then they don't make a matrix but carry the whole metal page by car from one newspaper to the other for adjustments. By error, my line must have been put into the metal page of the appeal. It was carried over to *The Moment* and there someone noticed the mistake, took out the line from the appeal page, and it promptly got stuck into this news item. 'The chances that such a thing should happen are not as small as one may think, considering our sort of typesetters and proofreaders,' Gavza said. 'They are the worst bunglers. No, let's not put the blame on the poor demons. No demon is as ignorant and as careless as our printers and printers' devils.'

"We had a great laugh, and in honor of that historic solution, we went and had coffee and cake. We spoke about old times and the countless absurdities published in the Yiddish press, God bless it. Especially strange were the misprints listed in the back of Yiddish books, such as: "On page 69 it is printed, 'She went to see her mother in. Bialystok'—It should read: 'He had a long gray beard.' Or: On

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page 87 it is written, 'He had a very strong appetite.'—It should have said, 'He went to see his former wife in Vilna.' On page 379, 'They took the train to Lublin.'—It should have been, 'The chicken was not kosher.' How a typesetter can make mistakes of this kind will always be a riddle to me. Another article was written about bacteria, 'which are so small that they can be seen only with the help of a telescope.'"

Dr. Gottlieb paused, trying to revive his extinguished cigar, sucking at it violently. Then he said, "My young friend, I tell you all this just to prove to you that one should not be in a rush to decide that Mother Nature has given up her eternal laws. As far as I'm concerned, the goblins and sprites have not taken over, and the laws of nature are still valid, whether I like them or not. And when I have to convey a message to my old wife, or to my not-much-younger girlfriend, I still use the telephone, not telepathy."

Translated from the Yiddish by the Author

THE LAST GAZE

The news of Bessie's death came as a shock from which he knew he would not easily recover. It was fifteen months since he'd last seen her, and only now did he realize how much she meant to him. That very night he went to the funeral parlor, but the girl at the window told him, "She isn't ready. Come back tomorrow morning."

He returned home and began a chess game with himself, making the moves for both sides. He tried smoking, but the tobacco tasted bitter. Although he hadn't eaten since breakfast, he felt bloated, as if he'd consumed a heavy meal. He stretched out on the sofa, leaving the lights on, and covered himself with his overcoat.

"If there is a hereafter," he mused, "let her appear before me now. Let her face become visible in the mirror, let her voice be heard, let some sign of her presence manifest itself." The lights shone with a midnight glare. The telephone on the nightstand remained silent. The radiator hissed and gurgled its last bit of steam. He imagined that he heard the movement of the earth as it rotated on its axis. That very second, as the earth spun amid the planets and fixed stars,

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multitudes of people and animals were giving up their lives. At least one hundred thousand men and women lay dying; many more would die the following day, and the next, and a week hence.

He partially covered his face with his hat, like a passenger on a train, and drifted into a half-sleep. He had brooded about his relationship with Bessie for years, but he could never explain it to himself. On the surface it appeared simple enough, but behind their mutual affection hovered a kind of enmity. They could neither stay together nor remain apart. Eventually they were able to get along only in the dark.

How had they spent their last night together, he wondered. How could they have known that this was to be their final meeting? What had they said to each other? What were the last words between them? Unfortunately, this last night had blended in his memory with many other nights. Most likely he'd promised to telephone the following day, but he never called her again, nor she him. Yet during those fifteen months he had thought of her every day, perhaps every hour. More than once he had put his hand on the receiver, and was about to lift it, but the power which had the final say ordained, No. Every time his telephone rang his hope soared that it was she. Then the day came when her brother called and told him the shattering news.

The radiator had grown still. Drowsily, he tried to listen to his dreams, but there was nothing therein he could grasp. The visions changed as quickly as they do in a fever. In one dream he was in a narrow side street somewhere. It was lined with wooden shacks, with roofs like boys' caps, housing a race of dwarfs. In the middle of the alley stood a straw bed stripped of linen. He lay on this pallet and gave a tattered urchin, an occupant of one of the huts, a dollar with the understanding that the boy was to change the bill and bring back ninety cents in silver. But the boy never returned. "He's stolen the dollar!" he berated himself, and deplored his stupidity in having trusted the youngster. And mingled with his regret was self-pity. What was he doing here in a strange bed, in this forsaken alleyway far from home, among a race of dwarfs? It all had to do with his many failures.

He woke up. The clock showed a quarter past three. He'd slept away half the night with nothing to show for it but a senseless dream. Later he showered and shaved and dressed in his finest suit. The previous day he'd sent a huge wreath of flowers to the funeral parlor. He was anxious to appear prosperous before Bessie's friends

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and relatives. Carefully he chose his shirt, tie, and cuff links. He prepared breakfast—not out of hunger, but to avoid a drawn appearance. He brewed strong coffee, added much sugar. Large flakes of snow were falling outside and although it was the dead of winter, a fly suddenly appeared. For a while it buzzed against the windowpane, then landed near some crystals of spilled sugar. It did not eat but seemed to ponder over them. From time to time it entangled its back feet, then straightened them out again. Finally, it landed on the brim of a saucer of leftover black coffee and gazed into it as if into an abyss. Perhaps, he had a sudden thought, the fly is Bessie.

He'd have to hurry. He wanted to see her alone, with no one looking on. The funeral parlor was not far from his house, but he took a taxi to avoid coming in from the cold with a red nose. Soon he was standing at the little window which connected the dead to the living.

"Fourth floor," the same girl told him.

He rode up on the elevator. The funeral parlor was deserted, an emptiness that would soon be overrun by a crowd. He stopped before a door with mottled milkglass panels, which held a card bearing Bessie's name and the hour of her funeral. It seemed to him that, in some eerie fashion, Bessie had become an official with her own office and office hours. He pushed open the door and saw her coffin with a part of its lid removed. From the ceiling a colored lamp cast a pale light, which mixed with the daylight filtering through the stained-glass windows. He was alone with Bessie.

Her face was covered by a square piece of gauze. She seemed almost alive, only lovelier, a perfect portrait painted by a master who wished to protect it from the dust. She seemed to smile, the smile of someone about to wake up, who savors the last few moments of stolen sleep. Her hair was combed up in a net, her throat bound in a white collar like a nun's. Did she recognize him from under her closed lids? His heart pounded like a trip-hammer and his temples pulsated. Outwardly he remained placid, but he knew that he could not endure this tension long. He did a forbidden thing, hesitantly lifting up the gauze. He imagined that Bessie was aware of his gazing at her with enchantment and trepidation. He had uncovered her face like a bridegroom at the unveiling of the bride. Then he replaced the gauze, as if she was something sacred and forbidden to be looked at. Thus as a boy he used to steal a glimpse when the kohanim blessed the congregation.

Presently he heard footsteps, and another person opened the

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door. Someone else wanted a private look at Bessie. In his confusion, he brushed past the newcomer, and later he could not be sure whether it had been a man or a woman.

Downstairs he was told that the services would begin in a half hour. He went out into the street to avoid meeting any of Bessie's relatives. It was too cold and he was shivering, so he went into a luncheonette and ordered coffee. He warmed his hands on the cup, took a sip, and stared into the coffee as if expecting to discover in the hot fluid the solution to the riddle.

All the old altercations with Bessie, all the friction between them had vanished, leaving in their wake the pure love that had once been theirs. If only he could have looked at her a few moments longer! He sat there, drunk with the intoxication he had known from the very beginning with her. He was falling in love with her again, and it was no longer winter but the spring of twelve years ago. The snowflakes falling outside reminded him of blossoms; a blinding stream of sunlight filtered through a split in the overcast skies.

But it was too late. One could no longer cause Bessie either good or evil. She lay there upstairs like a queen, independent of everyone, bestowing her grace equally upon all. He'd been prepared for every countermove in the chess game of love, except this. With one stroke she had checkmated him. In the wrinkles around her eyes and lips lingered an expression of triumph. He realized it only now: she had gained the upper hand completely. His heart pounded no longer but felt as if an unseen hand were squeezing it. He'd forgotten that one could lose absolutely. He hadn't reckoned with the kind of power that in one second erases everything petty and ambitious.

The clock in the coffee shop showed five minutes to eleven, and he went back to the funeral parlor. A crowd had gathered in the chapel. The coffin rested in its appointed place amid the wreaths of flowers. The electric candles were lit. All the benches were taken, save the last. Looking around, he saw unfamiliar faces. A woman sobbed with a laugh-like cry. A man honked his nose and wiped his spectacles. The women were whispering to one another, which reminded him of a women's synagogue during the Days of Awe. He sat down in an empty place. A rabbi in a tiny skullcap over a shock of freshly pomaded hair spoke with customary words, booming the biblical phrases with the usual mournful intonations: "He is the rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Afterward, the cantor chanted the prayer, "God is full of mercy." Dramatically, he

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switched from lulling whispers to an ear-shattering crescendo, and his chant, though obviously affected and rehearsed, tugged at the heartstrings, where grief and ceremony blend.

Afterward everyone stood up and began to file past the coffin to look at the corpse, as if for reassurance that they, the living, still possessed curiosity and strength. He did not join in this procession and went outside. The rabbi who had just concluded the eulogy was now matter-of-factly directing the cars, which had to maneuver in the narrow street to pick up mourners for the trip to the cemetery. The rabbi had forsaken his role as reverend and assumed the part of traffic expert, having cast off his solemnity like a mask.

For a while it appeared as if he, Bessie's friend, would be overlooked in the throng of mourners and bystanders, but one of the relatives spied him and directed him to a vacant seat in a limousine. He sat in the car among strangers. A man and a woman talked interminably about a lost key to her apartment, and the dire consequences of having lost it on a Sunday, when they'd been unable to locate a locksmith and had been forced to pierce the metal door with an electric drill. The relating of this incident did not exhaust the topic. The lost key became the theme of the trip. All the passengers offered up similar happenings, their own and their neighbors'.

He sat there astounded. Why had they bothered to come to the funeral at all, with so little respect for the deceased? Or was this a way to forget and ignore death while facing it? Such callousness in itself was an enigma. He pressed his face against the pane. He wanted to disassociate himself from these people. The car hurtled through the wilds of Brooklyn, through streets and avenues so strange they might as well have been in Philadelphia or Chicago. The Sunday quiet made them even uglier and more desolate than on a weekday.

They rode past a vast cemetery, a city of graves. The tombstones resembled a forest of toadstools, extending as far as the eye could see. Here and there among the crosses loomed the statue of an angel, its wings laden with snow, sorrow in its blind eyes. The living had in some mysterious fashion poured their fears and regrets into the stone and remained hollow shells themselves.

After a while, the limousine turned into the cemetery. Everything had been prepared beforehand: the open grave, the artificial grass, which did not even pretend to create an illusion. A woman cried out. Some man said Kaddish, reading the Aramaic words transliterated into English on a leaflet printed especially for

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such occasions. What he witnessed was not just a burial but an ancient sacrifice wherein a lot was cast to determine who should be given back to the soil on this gloomy winter day. They had to fill the grave in a hurry, before the earth froze.

As soon as the ceremony was over, the rush to depart began. Everyone spoke of one thing only—the best way to get back to the city. The matter of transportation had now become the paramount issue; men and women vied with one another in their knowledge of shortcuts, tunnels, and bridges.

He did not return to the limousine but struck out on his own, in search of a bus or subway. He had severed his relations with those who drove back in the black Cadillac with the stiff chauffeur. Someone had to acknowledge that Bessie was now lying in a casket covered with earth, while myriads of microbes were beginning to decompose her flesh and return it to the elements. Did some vestige of thought still remain in her brain? Had her spirit been entirely extinguished, and did absolute darkness alone hold sway? If that were so, Bessie hadn't even died—she had just vanished. It was actually his funeral, he thought, not hers.

He shivered and raised his collar as he trudged through snow and slush. He lifted his eyes heavenward; perhaps he would be given a sign there. Maybe the divine powers would make an exception. But the clouds overhead writhed brown as rust. The wind caught up his hat, but he recovered it at the very last second. The Lord of the Universe, or His appointees delegated to rule this insignificant planet, were apparently in no mood for revelation.

As he sloshed down the street, a hodge-podge of garages, unoccupied buildings, and empty lots, a horn sounded. He turned to see a man leaning out of a car window who said, half questioningly, "You were at the funeral. You want to go back to the city?"

"Yes."

"Get in." He got in and thanked the stranger. Only now did he take a real look at the driver, elderly but powerfully built, with broad shoulders, gray curly hair, and a red flattened face with a wide nose and thick lips clamped around a cigar. His eyes were gray and overhung by bristling brows. He wore a snappy yellowish overcoat of the kind worn by old people attempting to appear younger. His hat sat jauntily on his head, sporting a red feather in its band. Even his manner of driving accentuated his efforts to appear young: he lounged in his seat, holding the wheel negligently in one hand, with the easiness of a driver fully capable of handling any possible emer-

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gency. As he drove along, he spoke to his passenger, turning the edge of his profile carelessly in the process.

"Well, she is no longer with us," he said both to himself and to the passenger.

"Yes."

"A remarkable woman. There aren't many like her." And he pressed the car horn, barely missing a pedestrian.

For a time he maintained a morbid silence. Then he said, "I know you. That is, not personally, but Bessie told me all about you. She showed me your picture. That's how I recognized you."

"Are you a relative?"

"No, hardly that. We got to know each other about a year ago, and right off it turned, so to speak, into a friendship. She held nothing back, told me all there was to know, and I respected her for it. What's the point in bluffing? No one would expect a woman her age to be a virgin."

He abruptly braked the car for a red light. For a while neither of them spoke. Then the driver began again: "What was it that happened between you two? Why didn't you get married?—But like I say, it's all fate. There is nothing one can do to forestall destiny. I wanted her to come to some sort of a decision. I'm not rich, mind you, but she would have had a good life with me. Both my daughters are married. I'm in real estate. I build bungalows. If I wanted to, I could retire today. I offered to take her to Europe, to Israel, wherever she wanted. My sons-in-law don't need my money and you can't take it with you, so why the hell save and skimp? But she kept putting it off, putting it off.—*"Hey, where do you think you're going?"* He suddenly yelled to a passerby. *"You damned bum!"*

For a time he was silent. "Do you smoke? I smoke ten cigars a day. The doctors say it's bad for a man of my age, but one thing is sure, I won't die young anymore. And as long as I live, I want to enjoy myself. Once you're on the other side, it's already too late. Yes sir, it looked as if Bessie and I would hit it off real fine until that other party horned in—"

"The *other* party?"

"That Levy guy. She didn't tell you? I was under the impression that you'd remained friends."

"No, she didn't tell me."

"Yes, the dentist. What she saw in him I'll never know, but what do we men know about women's taste? He talks real fancy and runs to concerts at Carnegie Hall. He is also some kind of a big shot

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with the Zionists or whoever they are. As soon as I heard about him I warned her. She introduced us and asked my opinion. I'm the sort of guy, if I liked him, I'd have said so. I'm like that in business, too. Somebody can be my biggest competitor, but if they turn out a nice piece of work I'll be the first to admit it. But I didn't like him, so I told her, 'Do what you like, we'll still be friends.' And from that time on she started to go down. I called her a few times after that, but she didn't call me back. I took her out, too, to the theater, a restaurant. I was ready to forgive and forget, but she was proud. Too proud. She said to me, 'Sam, it's the end of me.' I said, 'Why is it the end?' She said, 'When others don't respect me I don't care, but when I lose my self-respect, then it's the finish.' What happened was, that sneaky little dentist went back to his wife because her father had died and left her a bundle. I found out that during the time he was going out with Bessie he kept a mistress, some Mrs. Rothstein, a divorcée. He is one of those guys who flit from woman to woman and think they deceive the whole world. What did she ever see in him? It wasn't love—she loved only you. But there is such a thing as ambition. Especially in women.—*Where is he going, that bum? Why do they give people like that a license?*—Yes, ambition. She was ready to marry and he, as they say, pulled the wool over her eyes. You didn't see her the last few months?"

"No."

"Well, she was crushed. Completely crushed. A good woman, a noble woman. How was it you didn't call her?"

"It just happened that way."

"I understand. I know how it is. He was at the funeral today, too, the little quack. He sat right in the first row and acted like the number-one mourner. He tried to make a speech over the body, but her brother wouldn't stand for it. Maybe you'd like to have lunch with me? I know a restaurant in this neighborhood—"

"No, thanks. But if you're hungry—"

"I'm not hungry, thank you. Even if I was, what of it? I'm too heavy as it is. The doctor ordered me to lose twenty pounds. Now how do you go about losing twenty pounds? You wouldn't think so, but I'm pushing seventy. What do I have to worry about? But her death is a great loss to me, a great loss. What about you? You live alone?"

"Yes. Alone."

"Well, as the saying goes, everyone has his own troubles. What does anyone know about anyone else? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Less than nothing."

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And he lapsed into silence. His head sank down, his back sagged, as if suddenly he felt the weight of his years. The car seemed to be hurtling downhill. Dusk descended quickly, as if a heavenly wick had been snuffed out. The sky became yellow as an old canvas. There was silence. It began to snow again—a gray snow, thick and wet, absorbing the light of day, and turning all being into primeval twilight.

Translated from the Yiddish by Joseph Singer

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Dominique Schnapper

THE POLITICS OF FRENCH INTELLECTUALS

Edith Kurzweil: Dominique Schnapper, friend and colleague, is a professor at the École des Hautes Études. She is one of sixteen members of the Commission de la Nationalité nominated by the French government. Among her many books are *Jewish Identities in France, L'épreuve du chomage, Morphologie de la haute administration française,* and *L'Italie rouge et noire.* She also is the founder and director of La Société des Amis de Raymond Aron, who was her father. William Phillips will moderate.

William Phillips: We asked Dominique to give a short talk, leaving plenty of time for questions and comments.

Dominique Schnapper: I'm very impressed, because when we agreed I would talk, William and Edith said that we would have an evening with a few friends, and I couldn't imagine that Mrs. Rose and *Partisan Review* had so many friends. So I'll give a very short talk, just to introduce the discussion, because I have no idea what American intellectuals know about French intellectuals and their relationship to politics these days.

First of all, I think it is necessary to go back to the situation in the fifties—not because you understand the present only through the past, but because French intellectuals themselves are obsessed by the past. The younger generation is always playing up Sartre, playing up Camus, playing up the former revolution, playing up the great revolution. Just to give you an example, next May we're going to celebrate the '68 events, and French publishers are preparing for this occasion. It's something like the '89 revolution. As you know, French people still are passionate about the French Revolution; they still are passionate about the Vichy situation. You can say anything about any politician in France, but you can't say he wasn't in the Resistance. Some horrible things have been said about Mitterrand, but once somebody said it was not certain he had been in the Resistance, in fact it was certain he had not, and that was enough to cause a scandal. So I have to go back to the fifties to explain the current situation.

Editor's Note: This discussion took place on October 7, 1987, in New York City, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Rose.

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Secondly, I want to make two major distinctions to understand the present situation. First of all, there has been a great gap, let's say a watershed, in the relationship of intellectuals to politics in France, between '68 and '75. You have the situation before '68 and the situation after '75—the period between '68 and '75 was a sort of mixture of the two periods. And the second distinction one should make is between what I call the top intelligentsia and the bulk of people who are professional intellectuals, that is, teachers in secondary schools, university teachers, journalists, publishers, media people. The evolution of the two groups is very different.

The main issue in intellectual life, before '68, was the attitude toward the Soviet Union. If you were on the right side, that is, on the left, you were communist or at least anti-anticommunist; the best position was to be anti-anticommunist. Not all intellectuals were communists, but to be a member of the Communist Party gave a certain value to an intellectual's life; it was something like a *rite de passage.* All the well-known intellectuals of today have been, at least between the age of 18 and 19—that's the minimum—members of the Communist Party. Some of them remained four years, some six years, some ten years, some came from the Resistance, some were Jewish and were communist because they were Jewish; some were not but were members of the Communist Party because their fathers were Vichyists, and they had to be communists in order to "pay" for their fathers. You had to go through the Communist Party for all sorts of reasons.

If you were really an anticommunist, you were considered either a nonintellectual, a bourgeois, a member of the Academie Française; or you were a former Vichyist; or you were paid by the CIA; or you were illegitimate in some way; or marginal. For example, after World War Two, Malraux, as you know, wrote about art, or was a politician, but played a small role in intellectual life. To be an intellectual was, at the minimum, to be an anti-anticommunist. The failure of *Preuves,* which remained marginal in Parisian life, really demonstrated the fact that one could not be anticommunist—for both moral and aesthetic reasons. It was not an intellectual issue, it was just morally wrong, and aesthetically not "in" to be anticommunist. And one generation later, those who then were called the professional anticommunists—such as my father—were just not read. They were people one should not read, because they were writing in the wrong newspaper or the wrong magazines. If you were writing in *Le Figaro,* for example, you were not discussed,

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because it was immoral to be discussed. It was a very violent atmosphere in intellectual spheres, as it was in '68. I try to explain some of this to my students, but now they cannot believe that in the fifties anti-anticommunists wouldn't shake hands with anticommunists.

As to sociology, which is my field, there was one sociology: it was Marxist, along with some empirical American sociology—a strange mixture. There was a turning point—1968. We didn't realize it then, but it appears now that the '68 movement was as much against the Communist Party as against the government. And, in a way, it was sort of an intellectual liberation for intellectuals who had stopped being communist to become leftists. To be leftist was a new kind of freedom. No longer did the so-called "domination by the dominators" explain everything. Of course, what we now call the '68 generation—I mean Lacan, Derrida, Bourdieu, Foucault—has been more or less influenced by Marxism, especially Bourdieu. But it was a change for intellectuals still to be Marxist, without being members of the Communist Party. And that made for a great change in intellectual life.

Then, apart from the '68 movement, there was *the great event,* namely Solzhenitsyn—his presence in France and the publication of his books. He played an immense role, although he said something the anticommunists had been saying for twenty years. I mean Koestler, Silone, and others. But, of course, he was Russian; he had a literary genius which the others didn't have; and he said it at the right time—at a time when it could be heard. And the last proof of this great change in Parisian intellectual life is the fact that the generation that wanted to be successful through the media—the new philosophers, Bernard Henri Lévy, André Glucksmann—came after Solzhenitsyn. Again they didn't say anything new, but they said it in a different way, and it became "in" to say it. So, that was the great turning point in '75.

Finally, we go to what's happened in these last twelve years, after Solzhenitsyn's appearance on the scene. Something absolutely new happened. To explain it, I have to introduce my second distinction, between the top intelligentsia and the professional intellectuals, whose number increased considerably between the two periods—to one million civil servants who belong to the French Ministry of National Education; plus all the media people, the publishers, the people working in the Maison de Culture who also are so-called intellectuals. Now, the top intelligentsia in Paris have something in

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common: they all are against the Soviet Union; they are against neutralism; they are fighting for the rights of man; and they think that the Communist Party and the Soviet Union are illegitimate. To be an intellectual now, you still have to be on the left, of course, but you have to think that both the Soviet Union and the Communist Party are bad.

All intellectuals now criticize totalitarianism. What we call the liberal right, and the moderate left, which as you know in your country consists of those whom you call liberals, has reached a consensus. That's entirely different from, let's say, the German situation, which is completely reversed. And all the new magazines which have been created in the last five or six years, such as *Le Débat, Liberté de L'Esprit, Commentaire,* are against totalitarianism. The so-called "right" people and the so-called "left," Castoriadis, Finkielkraut, Lefort, Glucksmann, thus have reached a sort of consensus. This is absolutely new. Apparently the violence of the intellectual struggles in the fifties and the sixties has in some way vaccinated the top intelligentsia against neutralist temptations and against any weakness for the communist world.

So, you might ask, what is the difference between the so-called right—the one we call liberal—and the so-called left? They are separate groups with their own personal relationships and different networks. But there are other differences. The left voted for Mitterrand and probably will next year. The right will vote for Barre. But it is hard to explain their differences. On the right, of course, they have a slightly different view of the welfare state. They believe it shouldn't go too far, and, as you know, the welfare state in France goes much further than it does in America. They think that there is a limit to the possibilities of social security; they think that private enterprise should be expanded; and they might think that Renault should become a private enterprise, instead of being a public one. The left are in favor of more intervention from the state; they are more in favor of defending social security, at all cost—and it costs very much. But all these differences are rather technical, and there can't be great ideological or moral debates among French intellectuals.

It's nothing like the splits over the Dreyfus affair. You can't fight about the privatization of Renault, as you did about the Dreyfus case, or the role of the Soviet Union, or the Communist Party. The Socialists, during the summer of '82 or '83, were extremely disappointed because not many intellectuals supported the

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way they were governing the country. The differences over policy were more technical than ideological. There was no reason for intellectuals to get involved in the question of whether a banking system should be more or less public, or more or less private. These were not questions for a great moral debate of the kind French intellectuals like. What divides the two groups—I'm still talking about the top intelligentsia—are two issues: the attitude toward the Third World and the attitude toward immigrants. These are the last issues one can quarrel about—where one can get those long lists of signatures, one of the typical features of French intellectual life, signatures of well-known intellectuals in *Le Monde* or in *Liberation.*

I know some of you have read the recent book by Simone de Beauvoir, *Adieux. A Farewell to Sartre,* in which she wrote about Sartre's last years. He was signing three times a day, for a poet in Latin America, for a politician in South Africa, against the action of the police in a meeting in the South of France. The signature of an intellectual is important to Parisian life. When you are a young intellectual, to be asked to sign means you are part of the group, you're getting into intellectual life. Well, now you may get a few signatures on South Africa and on attitudes towards immigrants. But neither for the Third World nor for South Africa is there any real passion, because most people agree. The right wing is not in favor of South African policy. And about the Third World, French intellectuals don't get terribly excited. On the immigrant problems, except for a few partisans of Le Pen, of course, most intellectuals agree that the immigrants should be kept in France because they have been brought up there. We should try to assimilate them as we have assimilated all the other immigrants. The real discussion is whether it will be difficult to do it with a Moslem population, whether the Moslem population is indeed different from the other waves of immigrants. But that is not terribly exciting either. The left and the right are both divided on the issue: some on the right think that we're going to assimilate the Moslems like all former immigrants, and some on the left don't. So for the top intelligentsia there is nothing to debate about strongly.

As for the millions of professional intellectuals, the image is very different. All of them are still under noncritical, Marxist influence. They're not for the Soviet Union, that's still the great change; they are very strongly for the socialist government; they are against Barre and Chirac, whatever they do; they are in favor of nationalization, whatever the technical reasons are; they are in favor of

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public schools against private schools; and they are still explaining the world through Marxist language and the Marxist perception of the world. We still find among them what was the typical reaction in the fifties and the sixties: that the issue is not whether one is right or wrong, but whether one is on the left. You don't discuss the issue itself, you discuss from what part of the scene one is talking. There was a book by two young philosophers, Ferry and Renaud, called *La Génération Soixante-huit,* which was against the four leaders of the former generation, Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, and Bourdieu. Of the four, two were dead. The two others refused to discuss the issue. But there was an extremely strong reaction from all the intellectuals I'm talking about, because most academics, journalists, publishers, and media people still live on a kind of vague Marxism, partly expressed by Bourdieu, and a vague Third World ideology. I think it will take a long time before this disappears. According to the rules of cultural diffusion, ideas go from the top to the bottom, so perhaps in twenty-five or fifty years even teachers in *lycées* won't be Marxist any more. But for the time being they certainly are, and as my friend Casanova once said, *"C'est leur fonds de commerce"*—they make their living on this kind of primary Marxism. For the time being, I don't think the top intelligentsia has a lot of influence on them.

Peter Shaw: I wasn't thinking about your distinction between the two kinds of intellectuals when reading *The Tears of the White Man* by Pascal Bruckner, but I have the impression from the book that the kind of Third Worldism you refer to was quite powerful among the elite, the top intellectuals, and that it amounted to self-flagellation over being white. Prostrating oneself for the idea of the Third World was of tremendous social importance; it undoubtedly had its influence on many kinds of political opinions.

Dominique Schnapper: You are right in that what remains of the old ideology is certainly centered on Third World ideology. But it has nothing of the violence and the importance of the debate about the Soviet Union in the fifties. You know we had the communist problem, then we had the leftist problem, then we had the Maoist problem, and what remains is the problem of the Third World. It is assumed that the whites are bad, but intellectuals are not sure they are that bad.

Peter Shaw: What about anti-American passion?

Dominique Schnapper: That's finished. The anti-American passion was extremely strong, as you know, but that was part of the passion

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about the communist world. There was the communist world on one side and the Americans—the anticommunists—on the other side. The top intelligentsia is very pro-American.

Peter Shaw: I think an anti-American passion, in which America is seen as the force that crushes the Third World, and as the opposite of the virtues of the Third World, must still exist.

Dominique Schnapper: It's very ambiguous. Even Régis Debray, who is sort of typical of this Third World ideology, is passionate about the United States, though he has a very ambiguous position. There is a kind of love-hate relationship between French intellectuals and Americans. I hope someone will deal with this subject, because it's a fascinating one. It's not "in" to be simply anti-American. At the beginning of the socialist government there was Jacques Lang, who once talked against American movies, and, as you may know, French intellectuals don't like French movies but love American ones. And there was something like an intellectual revolution protesting his position against American movies, from the left and from the right.

Dennis Wrong: What I see emerging in this country, among intellectuals who are university teachers, is precisely what you are describing in France. This is a much less centralized country, and things take longer to diffuse out into the boondocks of the provinces. I think, as far as Marxism is concerned, the situation is quickly developing in which the top intellectuals in the top universities have left it behind, are not interested anymore, are post-Marxist. But it is filtering down to the community colleges, to the West—I'm sorry, I'm a chauvinistic Easterner; I think the West is a nowhere place—and to high schools. This is just the kind of division, it seems to me, that you report about France. And I see it coming here, more slowly, and in a more halting kind of way.

Dominique Schnapper: Of course, I don't want to talk about America, which I don't know. But my feeling is that a generation ago one came to America to get rid of this Marxist language, and that now—after I've spent a term at Princeton—Marxist language is everywhere. It may be just one instance, but at Princeton it was astonishing.

Harold Kaplan: I'm always puzzled by the lack of relationships between the European countries I served and lived in—France and Germany. This little distance, these few hours by train between Bonn, or Berlin, and Paris, is a world. The Germans are in many

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ways becoming as interesting as you were two generations ago, twenty years ago. They are now going through an extraordinarily complicated relationship with the East, with Marxism again, and it's one that goes *dans la profondeur,* and they are doing it on their own, without any reference to the French experience.

Dominique Schnapper: Yes, exactly. We had a meeting with university professors from Germany, and we had the impression that they were coming from another world, and that we were twenty-five years younger, which is rather nice. We had the impression they were in the sixties.

Harold Kaplan: Far be it for me to suggest anything like historical determinism here, but the attitude that was prevalent when you were a little girl in the fifties, was, it seems to me, directly proportionate to the sheer mass, the actual weight of the communist influence in the country. The existence of a whole communist culture—communist municipalities, sports clubs, insurance systems for health, etcetera—consciously or not, weighed very heavily on French intellectuals. The notion of separating oneself from all that on the one hand or, on the other hand, finding through one's intellectual work some sort of way of linking up with it, was central to them. In the same way, it seems to me that the Germans are now very heavily influenced by the situation on the ground, if you will, the closeness, the intimacy of the East; they have begun opening up relations with the seventeen million Germans who are on the other side. They have the notion that they are all Central Europeans who are going to have to make some sort of accommodation. Somehow, in a manner that I could not explain, that affects their intellectual work. This would bring us back to the notion that there is first the will and then the intellect. There is a kind of existential need. And there was a need in France too, at least when I lived there, for French intellectuals to separate themselves from all this, and it was doubly difficult because of the sheer weight of the communists.

Dominique Schnapper: I think you're quite right, and one can give the Italian example. As you know, in Italy the Communist Party still has thirty-two or thirty-three percent of the votes. Most intellectuals now are Marxists and go through the Communist Party, which is absolutely finished in France. I think that the weight of Eastern Germany is important to the evolution of the German intellectuals. What is fascinating is the enormous gap between Germany and France, and the nonintellectual relationship between the two.

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French people do not know German. When you meet a German you always speak English together.

Edith Kurzweil: I think Dominique said part of what I wanted to say; I think you're right. However, I would emphasize that the history of France is totally different from that of Germany; the underlying ideas and aims are different. The Germans know they can't reunify with Eastern Germany—but there are the hopes and the myths. They say they are two different nations, but they are also one; they cannot go against their brothers in Eastern Germany; they don't want to have a war; they are afraid of a nuclear bomb—it's going to hit them, rather than anyone else. These are the things that German intellectuals consider when they then go off into theories that are very hard to understand, and frequently they get so theoretical that you have to start translating back into everyday language. Also, there is the language barrier. And there has been the specter of war for many years. French and German society are historically oriented—which Americans are not, and usually don't understand.

Dominique Schnapper: French people haven't forgotten the war. My country house is in a southern village. Many Germans come to buy houses and are richer than we are. And the people there are extremely anti-German. They remember the war. In spite of everything, we have these feelings.

Harold Kaplan: It's a dose of good old-fashioned xenophobia?

Dominique Schnapper: They don't have the same reaction towards the Italians, for instance, or the British, or the Americans. *It's the Germans.* We don't like them, take it as a fact.

Harold Brodkey: Can you characterize this pro-Americanism in a little detail? Beside the fact that they come to teach at our colleges.

Dominique Schnapper: That's very important. French academics, who are relatively poor, come to American universities because they need the money. They also adore American movies. When I came with my daughter four years ago she thought she knew Americans, because she had looked at films all her life, and she was recognizing things which she had never seen before.

Harold Brodkey: What movies do they like?

Dominique Schnapper: They like John Wayne: he is a hero in France. I know that American intellectuals can't understand that.

William Phillips: I do.

Dominique Schnapper: We are, more or less, in a kind of American culture. American culture has become part of our culture.

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Harold Brodkey: American movie culture? American high culture as well?
Dominique Schnapper: French popular culture is American.
Harold Brodkey: And this translates into professionalism? A sense of personal liberty? A different sense of values? What is it besides the fact that American popular culture is now dominant throughout the world? Is the pro-Americanism a feeling, without genuine cultural basis?
Dominique Schnapper: It depends whom you are talking about. The top intelligentsia always have come to America. To have a career as an intellectual you have to have been through the most important American universities—Princeton, Yale, and Harvard now are part of the *rite de passage.* The Communist Party used to be one; the Ivy League universities are the new one. That's part of the life of the top intelligentsia.
Harold Brodkey: But do they admire these colleges, or do they just admire John Wayne?
Dominique Schnapper: They admire the way you can work there, compared to the way you work in France. François Furet spent three months in Chicago and said that he found a new joy in teaching because the conditions and the students are so good. I don't want to invite you to the French universities because of this, but you would understand immediately what it means for a French academic to be in an American university for a few months.
Harold Brodkey: Are the students characterized as being intellectually more searching, as having fresher minds, as having a profounder sense of possibility or culture?
Dominique Schnapper: That I couldn't answer.
Diana Trilling: Do the French intelligentsia have a sense of the role played in American culture by the new Yuppie culture?
Dominique Schnapper: No, they know little about them.
Diana Trilling: Haven't they heard about them?
Dominique Schnapper: I don't think they feel it's very important.
Diana Trilling: Surely they're mistaken in that.
Dominique Schnapper: They may be mistaken; I don't say they're right.
Diana Trilling: The other question I wanted to ask: is there a French analogue for neoconservatism in America?
Dominique Schnapper: There are a few writers who try to be the equivalent. But there is nothing like this kind of tradition in French life. What we call moderate right, in France, is now something close to your "liberals."

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William Phillips: What about François Revel?
Dominique Schnapper: He is not a neoconservative, he's a liberal in our terms!
Diana Trilling: We would call him a neoconservative.
Dominique Schnapper: You would call him a neoconservative?
William Phillips: How would you characterize the magazine *Commentaire*?
Dominique Schnapper: Commentaire is considered Barriste, center-right, what we call liberal, Tocquevillian. What would you call it, if not liberal? How else would you characterize the Tocquevillian tradition?
Harold Kaplan: On this point, remember Koestler and his progeny. The closest thing to what we call neoconservative comes through that. *Commentaire,* Revel, Casanova, Besançon, even though he is *libéral.*
Dominique Schnapper: Well, Revel, Casanova, and Besançon are different cases.
Harold Kaplan: Every neoconservative is different from every other one. There is a family recognized there. It is no accident, as the Marxists like to say. These people often meet with our neoconservatives. You'll have from here people such as Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz. So there is a sort of elective affinity, even though the phenomena are not exactly alike.
Dominique Schnapper: I would say that Kristol and Podhoretz have something in common with the right wing of *Commentaire,* but not at all with the left wing.
Diana Trilling: How would you define that difference between the right wing and the other wing of *Commentaire*?
Dominique Schnapper: They all are antigovernment. They all are antineutralist in international relations. Most of them are not anti-Third World. They are against the position that the Third World is the responsibility only of the Europeans. Their position is that it should be some kind of a common responsibility. Some of them, I'm sure, would have been pro-Dreyfus right from the beginning. Some others, not.
Leonard Kriegel: I'm curious about how you define a trend that goes from a pro-Soviet stance roughly from 1945 to 1970, and then gradually becomes anti-Soviet, and now is firmly anti-Soviet. Has *glasnost* affected this at all? How do French intellectuals look upon *glasnost*? And how does that affect their view of America?
Dominique Schnapper: Every time something happens in the Soviet

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Union a certain part of the population says, "Something new is happening." But I think that most intellectuals don't feel it is very new, although you will always find someone who thinks it's new. But the general position among the intellectuals, I would say, is that the fact that nobody knew what had happened in Russia during the last few months was a shock to all those who said something really new had happened.

François Baudry: There are two or three issues which you haven't mentioned, although you've touched on them. One of them is the issue of anti-Semitism. In this country there is a very strong pro-Israel movement, which does not exist in France, certainly not in the same sectors and not to the same degree. And with the viewing of *Shoah* last year, at least on the East Coast, there was a very strong interest in keeping the Holocaust alive. I wonder what the attitude of the French intellectuals is now towards anti-Semitism. A related issue is the attitude towards the extreme rightist renewel in East Germany. A third issue is the response of the French intellectuals to the oil crisis and their friendship with the Arabs. Many people feel that France has betrayed Israel, particularly since De Gaulle.

Dominique Schnapper: Of course, French Jews, as you know, are much less numerous than American ones, and they play a much smaller role in French politics. They play a role in French politics not as Jews but as other French citizens do. There are some Jewish organizations that have more or less the same position on Israel as the Americans. But they play a much smaller role. Judging by the publications and the polls it seems that anti-Semitism is no more an issue among all the "legitimate" parties, either on the right or on the left. Le Pen is "illegitimate" among intellectuals and politicians. I don't know if you heard about the famous "detail"? Until the very day of the "detail" he had been extremely cautious, and there was not a word he uttered that could lead one to accuse him of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Arabic feelings have taken the place of anti-Semitic feelings. Anti-Semitic feelings are no longer expressed in France. Not that they don't exist—they exist in all Western countries—but it's not a political issue.

There was a crisis in '67. I suppose you are referring to De Gaulle's position. It marked the end of a very happy period in the history of the Jews in France when French policy was one hundred percent on Israel's side, against the Algerians. That stopped in '67 and never resumed in the same way. Giscard was extremely un-

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skillful—to understate it. Mitterrand is very skillful. But their policies are not very different. French policy tries to keep the equilibrium between the pro-Arabic position and the pro-Israeli one.
William Phillips: Could you pursue your answer to Diana Trilling's question, which was not completely clear to me, and I suspect to others as well. For example, what are the differences between the members of the *Commentaire* group?
Diana Trilling: You don't mean to call the liberal right anything which we would describe as neoconservative, do you? Because the word liberal is poison to the neoconservatives.
Dominique Schnapper: If the *Commentaire* people were in the United States, some of them would be on the left of the Republican Party, and the others would be on the right of the Democratic Party.
Joanna Rose: Then that is neoconservative, is it not?
Dominique Schnapper: Okay, if you want to call that neoconservative. I wouldn't, but that's up to you here.
Harold Kaplan: The very small number in *Commentaire* who never did the Marxist bit are *liberaux*—which we should translate as "free market."
Dominique Schnapper: I agree.
Harold Kaplan: Their roots go back to the old French conservatives. There is a kind of family feeling.
Dominique Schnapper: One of the great families, among French intellectuals, are the former communists. Some of them are on the left, some are on the right now, and when you haven't been a communist, as is my case, you feel outside the family. It is unpleasant, because, after all, they were wrong. Yet, they feel that you lack that experience—some of them say it, others think it. They believe that if you haven't been through the Communist Party you don't really know about politics.
Harry Kahn: Was there any strong reaction on the part of the intellectuals to the scuffling of the Greenpeace ship, in New Zealand?
Dominique Schnapper: That's the difference between America and France. Most French people, on the right and on the left, thought that we were correct, except that we failed. Greenpeace was paid for by the Russians, so we were right to do what we did, but we should have succeeded. There was no debate on the question. I remember during that summer I had dinner with one of the most important officials of the Socialist Party, and we both agreed that what we did was right, except that the stupid photographer shouldn't have gone back to the boat and gotten killed.

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Marion Oliner: What about the importance that religion and the church have in this country, as against its being a negligible factor in France? Don't we have to take into account the tremendous influence that religious fanaticism sometimes has here when we talk about right and left?

Dominique Schnapper: You're correct. We don't have these religious passions that you have in the United States. We had them in the nineteenth century. We now have a Catholic Church that is doing social work and does not always seem to believe in God; Protestant churches have never really existed in France; and the Jews have no church.

Bernard Grossman: To return to the question of morality and politics, an issue here, for example, was not our selling arms but the fact that our president had made a personal crusade that we would never sell to terrorists.

Dominique Schnapper: Well, we are so used to politicians' lies that we are not shocked. That is a rather cynical position of the French, I know, and completely different from the American attitude. Of course the President lied.

Bernard Grossman: Are there other ethical qualities that the French look for in a politician?

Dominique Schnapper: You have to *look* respectable. Six months after Giscard d'Estaing had been elected president, he came back around six o'clock in the morning driving his own car, and he had a problem with a milk truck. I don't know how it got there because milk no longer is delivered to anyone in France, but that is the story. The fact that he had been with another woman rather than his wife was not shocking, but he shouldn't have let on about it. The French were not shocked by the fact that the President of the United States most probably lied; there was no moral reaction. I can't tell you what went on in people's souls, but it was not expressed. There was a famous story about Giscard's diamonds, a stupid story, stupid for him; there was no moral reaction as there would have been in America.

Dennis Wrong: What about the current kind of high-level argument over what is called postmodernism, which seems to line up Habermas and various other people in Germany, in some sense on the left, against the conservatism of the very people I thought you placed on the left, in the tradition of Lacan, Derrida, Bourdieu.

Dominique Schnapper: Oh, they are on the left.

Dennis Wrong: But the Germans here come out as the defenders of the project of modernity and the possibility of some future transforma-

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tion of the world, whereas the French, although they come out on the left, are seen as being sort of cynical and postmodern and neoconservative. I'm just curious—I don't want to draw on our common affiliation as sociologists too much, because it would leave out other people—but what would be your reaction to that?

Dominique Schnapper: I'm not absolutely sure. Your question is about the Germans rediscovering the kind of Marxists like Habermas. We're discovering Habermas now, because Habermas has been translated rather late. When I told you that the top intelligentsia have stopped being Marxist, of course it's not that simple; there are still a lot of Marxists. What I meant is that there is something new, in the fact that you can be non-Marxist. And it is very funny, because some people are wondering whether they didn't start too early. Some people who really want to be "in" have stopped being Marxists, and some stop and say "Well, I'm not sure to be followed. I may be a bit early."

David Twersky: Do you think either Gary Hart or Joe Biden would have had to drop out of the French presidential race?

Dominique Schnapper: Not for the reasons they had to drop out. To the credit of French journalists, they wouldn't have done what American journalists have done.

David Twersky: You said that the Socialist government was very interested in what the intellectuals think of them in office. Does President Mitterrand pursue relationships with the intelligentsia, with groups of writers? Shimon Peres often meets with them.

Dominique Schnapper: The relationship with the intellectuals has always been very important to the image of the president in France. And Mitterrand himself writes books. He is keen on having an intellectual image. President Giscard himself once came to one of the television sessions of "Apostrophes" to talk about Maupassant, just as any of you would talk about a writer. De Gaulle wrote his memoirs. That's part of French tradition, that the high-level politicians are also men of letters, shall we say.

Richard Frelek: I'm from Warsaw. I would like to thank you for a very interesting lecture, and I completely agree with your assessment. We feel also in Eastern Europe that the main channel of exchange between Eastern and Western Europe has been via the United States, via American universities. France for nearly two centuries was the main source for intellectual inspiration in Eastern Europe—much more than Germany, which influenced Eastern Europe in technology and industry. Servan-Schreiber's book, *An American Challenge,*

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became very well known in Europe and somehow shifted the attention of Europeans to the United States. Later on, inspirations and influences came from the United States.

Your father, Raymond Aron, was to a great extent right in his book *The End of the Age of Ideology*. This is true also in Eastern Europe. More and more, intellectuals there have become very pragmatic. The division among intellectuals is much deeper about the values of civilization. Much of the discussion now is about the human environment, on whether Marx was right. In the last few years we have had deeper and deeper divisions among those you call top intellectuals, between the conservative and the liberal wing. It is good that the liberals are winning.

In the last two decades German literature—Grass, Böll,—has gotten much more attention than before. Marx is very influential in the European literary world. But that is not the main source of inspiration: it is American literature and the new wave of Russian literature. There is also the great influence of Japanese literature, even in America. Far less, I'm sorry again to say, is French literature. I admire French culture, but France has been behind the influence of the United States and some other countries. We need many more links within Europe.

Dominique Schnapper: I'm glad there has been a Polish voice. Solidarity has been extremely important to the view the French have of the Soviet Union. There are also some old romantic links between France and Poland. The French have been particularly sensitive to the situation in Poland, and it has been important to the negative image of the communist world which French intellectuals do have.

Now, in spite of all his gifts, I don't think that a book by Servan-Schreiber could by itself have changed the relationship between Poland, France, England and the United States so much. There are other reasons. Yet, never has a book been so influential, except maybe Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag*.

Joanna Rose: I was in Poland last June and met many writers, film directors; they all still talked about Servan-Schreiber. He has had an amazing effect.

William Phillips: In your comments on moralizing in politics, you seem to make a distinction between the long-term interests of governments and the short-term interests of elected officials.

Dominique Schnapper: We have an idea of the state, excluding the people who are at the head of the state. I don't think Americans have an

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idea of the state to the same extent. I think they developed against the idea of the state.

Bernard Grossman: I was wondering, also, if you could elaborate on students in France, as opposed to American students. My contacts in the universities, with friends who teach, complain of the lack of intellectual curiosity in the United States. More people are going into politics, and people want to pursue things that are more economically profitable. They might consider a discussion like this a waste of time.

Dominique Schnapper: Am I hearing Allan Bloom now?

Bernard Grossman: Yes, but my experience is that he is correct.

Dominique Schnapper: That's a large subject. There is a great difference between French and American students. French universities are free. That means that people can stay in universities for many years, spending very little money and doing very little work. You can live with your family and go to the university, and the relationship towards the university is very different. There is more of Latin, Greek, and the classical tradition left in France, I think, than in America. But it certainly is decreasing, and more and more people are going into math. It's a tragedy in a bourgeois family if your son or daughter, more your son, is not gifted in math. The so-called university world is really divided into two. You have one selective part of the university: Les Grandes Écoles, the medical school, and École Normale Superieur, which you enter through hard competition. That's very vigorous and job-oriented. This is little or no unemployment in this group because these students are recruited for eventual jobs. And you have the mass of 600,000 to 700,000 students who go from one place to another, work very little at the university, under very bad conditions, and who are not students in the American sense. They have a kind of social status between childhood and job. So I think that what we call the cultural tradition is a bit stronger in France, although we are going in the same direction. But we always have kept a bit more of the humanistic tradition than the Americans.

Stephen Koch: Still, during the sixties and after, France adopted an approach which until then had been pursued principally in the United States—namely, virtually universal education for the middle class. My impression is that was quite new in Europe.

Dominique Schnapper: No, it was not just the United States; we had had the same idea for some time. There was a very famous book in

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French written in the twenties: *La barrière et le niveau,* translated as, "To be a bourgeois is to pass the baccalaureate." The baccalaureate was the only rite of passage into the bourgeois class. One result of '68 was people smoking in seminars, except in mine; another result was that professors now have to have some kind of personal charisma if they want to be listened to. Before they were listened to just because they were professors. The year 1968 did not create these things, but it symbolized the fact that we had very highbrow, elite-oriented universities. I remember that when I was a student taking history, there were only forty people in all of Paris who took the second year in history. The number of people who thought they could go to a university was much smaller, but the increase began with the baby boom in the sixties. The '68 movement was both a consequence and a cause of the change. Suddenly there was no room; there were no teachers; there was no money. Suddenly there was a situation nobody had anticipated, and nobody knew how to cope with.

Bernard Grossman: Someone once remarked that the French educational system was designed to create intelligent leadership, and it actually produced intellectuals, which is not quite the same thing.

Dominique Schnapper: Second-rate intellectuals.

Bernard Grossman: I'm wondering if that has changed.

Dominique Schnapper: They're producing people who don't want to be workers and are not able to be bona fide intellectuals. As I told you, there are really two systems inside this academic system. There is the first system, the selective one, which is very high-level, and I think very good. And there is the rest, which is not very good. But not *all* American universities are very good either. There is a big difference between great universities and the rest of the university world. We are coming by very different ways to the same kind of situation, but we're not as rich. That's the trouble; it costs us too much money.

Shirley Lans: People say that to be acceptable as a middle-class person you have to go to college. Hence you have a great proliferation of those schools. Is there the same tendency in France to create new openings? Are the universities expanding so that everyone can go?

Dominique Schnapper: Yes, they have been expanding but under very bad conditions. This year, for the first time since 1960 there have been fewer first-year students. We are embarrassed to invite foreign colleagues to our universities, because of the conditions under which university professors are teaching, not to mention their salaries. The way they must work is indecent, even in Paris.

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Shirley Lans: Is there public support?
Dominique Schnapper: Yes, but it's still difficult.
William Phillips: Thank you, Dominique, for a very interesting and informative talk. This is the first time, for example, I have heard that French intellectuals like the working conditions of American universities so much more than their own. I used to think that American intellectuals were much more politically advanced than the French, but after your discussion of the French intellectual scene, one has to wonder whether the tides have not turned in both countries.

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Pearl K. Bell

KATE CHOPIN AND SARAH ORNE JEWETT

In the waning years of the nineteenth century, two remarkable women, exact contemporaries living at opposite ends of the immense American diversity, dissented from the cultural shibboleths and popular taste of their time in the way they wrote about the life they knew best. Kate Chopin (1851–1904) was consciously defiant of the decencies and sexual prudery of the 1890s, and sought to uncover the sensuality and discontent of women which the stultifying conventions of the age refused to acknowledge. Sarah Orne Jewett (1849–1909) preferred to look back rather than forward to the emancipated future envisioned by Mrs. Chopin; her sensibility and values were deeply anchored in the past of a rural New England that was rapidly disappearing in her lifetime, but she, too, shunned the idealized versions of actuality which a culture dedicated to gentility demanded of its literature.

Immeasurably different though they were as women and as writers, neither Mrs. Chopin nor Miss Jewett showed any affinity for the noble morality and complacent optimism represented by the three venerable New Englanders—James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., and John Greenleaf Whittier—who were still revered as the high priests of American literature. Even so staunch a defender of realism as William Dean Howells could go only so far and no further in accepting writers who dared to concern themselves with the seamier and less benevolent aspects of American society toward the end of the century. In the notorious statement that blighted his reputation for years, Howells urged American novelists to deal with "the more smiling aspects of life, which are the more American, and seek the universal in the individual rather than the social interests."

Several notches below this arch conception of literary art, the popular taste of the time was equally uninterested in the depiction of actual life, and the great mass of American readers couldn't get enough of the historical romances churned out by such best-selling novelists as Francis Marion Crawford, who wrote dashing claptrap

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about aristocratic love and honor in exotic locales; Charles Major *(When Knighthood Was in Flower);* Booth Tarkington *(Monsieur Beaucaire);* and Owen Wister *(The Virginian).* (And still lower down on the literary scale were the successors of the "damned mob of scribbling women" that Hawthorne had railed against in the 1850s, who flooded the market with their tear-drenched melodramas.) When Crawford scornfully asked, "What has art to do with truth? Is not truth the imagination's deadly enemy?" he was being exceptionally cynical. Though Mr. Lowell and Mr. Holmes would not have said it quite so nakedly, Crawford's haughty questions were not all that far removed from what they believed and practiced.

Some few writers of the time thought otherwise. They knew in every fiber of their confidence in themselves that art has everything to do with truth, that the imagination can flourish only when it is fed by the particularity of a writer's experience and judgment. But in the last years of the century such writers as Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Edward Arlington Robinson, and Theodore Dreiser were either misread, ignored, or denounced because they sought to write more openly about sexual passion and economic corruption than the prevailing culture would tolerate. It was only in a later and different America that the scope and courage of their achievement was recognized.

Though they are admittedly minor figures compared to such towering originals as Norris and Dreiser, Kate Chopin and Sarah Jewett, in their distinctive ways, also rejected the idealization of reality. In their quest for models of the kind of work they hoped to accomplish, they were emboldened by their reading of Flaubert, and sought to enact his axiom that one must write about ordinary life as though it were history. In their dissimilar fashion, they were moved by the same compelling need to trust what they observed and felt as the truth of their literary art.

Kate Chopin (née O'Flaherty) was born a decade before the outbreak of the Civil War in St. Louis, Missouri, of an Irish immigrant father and a mother descended from early French pioneers. Kate grew up equally fluent in English and French, but was always drawn more strongly to French writers than to those of England and her own country. When she discovered Maupassant at an impressionable age, she felt an immediate kinship with a writer who offered "life, not fiction," because he was "a man who had escaped from tradition and authority." It would be years, however, before she had the time and confidence to think of herself as a writer.

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At nineteen, Kate O'Flaherty was married to Oscar Chopin, a New Orleans businessman who was the son of a French father and Creole mother. When Oscar's cotton business collapsed in 1879, he moved his wife and children to rural Natchitoches (pronounced Nak-uh-tush) Parish, where he managed his family's plantation on the Cane River. (In local legend, this was where the original of Simon Legree had so cruelly mistreated his slaves.) Oscar Chopin died suddenly, of swamp fever, in 1883, and Kate proved surprisingly competent at managing the plantation for a while after his death. But before long the young widow decided to move back to her mother's house in St. Louis with her six children. Oscar Chopin had left his widow well provided for, and she had considerable help from her own family; money was never a problem.

Now all of thirty-two, a handsome, restless, and ambitious woman, she began writing sketches and stories about the Creoles, the Cajuns, and the blacks she had known in Louisiana. The Creoles and Cajuns who were to figure so prominently in Mrs. Chopin's work were of different stock and rank in Louisiana society. The former were the pure-blooded descendants of French settlers, an aristocracy apart from the Cajuns, who were lower down on the social scale, and were descended from the Acadians expelled from Nova Scotia by the British in the eighteenth century. Sooner than her literary experience warranted, however, she plunged into a novel, *At Fault,* which she published at her own expense in 1890. It deals with a young widow, Thérèse Lafirme, obviously modelled on the author, who takes over the running of a huge plantation after her husband's untimely death. An intelligent, beautiful, independent woman—the first of several such in Mrs. Chopin's fiction—Thérèse still clings to a stern moral view of the sanctity of marriage, and she forces the man she loves to remarry the dreary alcoholic he had divorced some years back. Everyone festers in high-minded misery until the awful wife is conveniently disposed of during a violent storm, and the lovers can marry with a clear conscience.

At Fault has its charming and vivid moments, especially in the descriptions of the lush landscape of Natchitoches, but the machinery of the plot creaks and rattles. Mrs. Chopin tried to demonstrate the destructiveness of her heroine's moral inflexibility, but the characters remain lifeless pawns. The reception of the book was on the whole not unkind, though one bluenose reviewer spoke to the spirit of the age when he refused to use Mrs. Chopin's explicit

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word "drinking" and settled instead for the respectable euphemism "habit of taking stimulants." But the book soon sank out of sight, and it is interesting today mainly as one of the earliest American novels to deal approvingly with the risqué subject of divorce despite, as Mrs. Chopin sharply noted, "the exacting and ignorant rule of . . . moral conventionalities."

Discouraged by the failure of *At Fault,* Kate Chopin destroyed her second novel and began to concentrate on the lively stories about Louisiana that were soon published in the *Atlantic,* the *Century,* and *Vogue.* Her entire career as a writer was packed into a single, astonishingly prolific decade in which, in addition to three novels, she tossed off some hundred stories, many of them collected in *Bayou Folk* (1894) and *A Night in Acadie* (1897). The range of these stories is wide, but it is the mettlesome directness she brought to "forbidden" subjects that now seems so impressive: miscegenation, rocky marriages, rebellious women, even a physically explicit account, in "The Storm," of a casually adulterous romp that ends with neither guilt nor divine retribution, only the savored afterglow of idle pleasure.

Because Mrs. Chopin's stories grew out of her intimate familiarity with the people and customs of New Orleans and rural Louisiana, and she conveys the music of the Cajun and Creole dialects so convincingly, she was regarded by most of her readers as just another local-color writer—a late blooming of the post-Civil War rage for a kind of literary anthropology of regional folkways, in which the dialects and customs of the American provinces were sentimentally depicted as quaint and comic, like hillbillies on television. But Kate Chopin had no interest in such condescending uses of the past, and she resented being identified with such local-color storytellers as George Washington Cable, who also wrote about Louisiana. In the best of her stories the regional peculiarities provide the enriching texture, but her true interest lay beyond that, in the human drama. Though she sometimes reached too quickly for tricky Maupassant-like endings, and often relied on the dubious ease of coincidence—she did, after all, want to be published—in the best of her stories she confronted the taboos about sex and marriage with a clear-eyed candor that few writers of the time, male or female, dared to attempt.

Kate Chopin's work contains a smoldering abundance of restless, unhappy wives (and some fretful, dissatisified husbands, *pour lagniappe*), and in one startling tale, "The Story of an Hour," written a few years before her masterpiece, *The Awakening,* one can

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feel the bold design of that novel beginning to take shape in the author's head. In the brief compass of less than three pages, Mrs. Chopin described the reaction of a young woman to the news that her husband has been killed in a railway accident. She is stunned, but she finds herself responding to the news not with an outburst of grief but with a whispered "free, free, free!"

> She saw a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome. There would be no one to live for her during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature . . . . What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!
>
> "Free! Body and soul free!" she kept whispering.

Precisely because "The Story of an Hour" is almost entirely stripped of my distracting details about setting or character, its meaning is charged with a direct, almost brutal power. The young wife-cum-widow becomes a disembodied voice, not a person, a voice rejoicing in the realization that freedom is no longer unthinkable. Mrs. Chopin did make a conciliatory gesture toward the magazine editors of the time by bringing the husband through the door in the last paragraph, whereupon the wife drops dead of "the joy that kills." But her irony was unmistakable, and the story was rejected as "unethical" by the editor of the *Century*. It eventually appeared in *Vogue,* whose editors obviously had a very good idea of the snakes that lurked in their female readers' hearts.

A woman of uncommon urbanity and intelligence, Kate Chopin was appalled by the straitlaced parochialism of American literary culture in the dying century. In breeding, temperament, and taste, she felt much closer to Mme. de Staël and George Sand than to any native writers. She smoked cigarettes, liked wine, and saw no reason to play down what a friend described as "a quality of sex [in her] that is inexplicable," though her most assiduous biographer, Per Seyersted, does not mention any love affairs. She never remarried, but sexuality was hardly inexplicable to Kate Chopin. She had undoubtedly felt more in her element in the

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easygoing and cosmopolitan society of New Orleans than in St. Louis. Yet she did not choose to be an outsider in her hometown, where she was the hostess of a famous salon, and belonged to the same literary club as T. S. Eliot's mother. At the same time, she did not hesitate to say exactly what she thought about the suffocating narrowness that dominated the American literary scene. In 1894, after yawning through a conference of the Western Association of Writers (its star was the folksy Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley), she denounced the moribund songbirds:

> The cry of the dying century has not reached this body of workers, or else it has not been comprehended. There is no doubt in their souls, no unrest . . . . Among these people are to be found . . . a clinging to past and conventional standards . . . and a singular ignorance of, or disregard for, the value of the highest art forms. There is a very, very big world lying not wholly in northern Indiana . . . . It is human existence in its subtle, complex, true meaning, stripped of the veil with which ethical and conventional standards have draped it.

In her view, that veil had been rolled into a noose, strangling the sexual and intellectual independence of American women who foolishly submitted to their husbands' notions. As Mrs. Chopin put it in "The Gentleman from New Orleans," the ideal wife showed "a certain lack of self-assertion which her husband regarded as the perfection of womanliness." In story after story she deplored the passive timidity of women—"self-assertion" was one of her favorite terms—and she delighted in the plucky heroine of "Athénaïse," who runs away from her husband because "It's jus' being married that I detes' and despise . . . . " As the author wryly commented on the young bride's dilemma, "The day had not yet come when a young woman might ask the court's permission to return to her mama on the sweeping ground of a constitutional disinclination for marriage."

After her second collection of stories came out in 1897, Kate Chopin realized that she needed a larger and more sustaining form than the short story to dramatize her vision of female self-fulfillment, and she spent the next year writing her prophetic novel, *The Awakening,* which was published in 1899.

There is no question that she had *Madame Bovary* in mind as she began writing the book: both heroines resent their husbands, neglect their children, take an adulterous lover, and commit suicide. But

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there are significant differences. Mrs. Chopin's Edna Pontillier, married to a wealthy Creole businessman in New Orleans, is not a naive and restless fool like Emma Bovary, longing to escape from the boredom of provincial bourgeois life. Mrs. Pontillier is a sensitive and perceptive woman who put away her girlish fantasies of grand romance when she married. But now, at twenty-eight, the mother of two young sons, she feels strangely haunted by "an indescribable oppression, which seemed to generate in some unfamiliar part of her consciousness."

This nameless and perplexing sensation has emerged in the loosening languor of summer, which she is spending with her children on an island in the Gulf of Mexico, and Edna realizes that it has something to do with the dense proximity of the many Creole women whom she ordinarily sees only occasionally at home in New Orleans. In the midst of this Creole and Catholic world, Edna, a Protestant from Kentucky, feels like the odd woman. She had never been at ease with the Creole women's "entire absence of prudery," and is shocked by the casually uninhibited way they talk about "unmentionable" intimacies like childbirth. Nor can she understand the free-and-easy flirtatiousness that is never allowed to encroach on their inviolable wifely chastity. When Edna becomes infatuated with Robert Lebrun, a young bachelor on Grand Isle, and begins to take his caressing glances seriously, she has misunderstood the Creole code that finds flirtation amusing but adultery impermissible, a threat to the sanctity of marriage and motherhood.

As Kate Chopin conveys the smell and the look of the tropical island, the rhythmic and dreamy sensuality generated by the heat of the sun and "the seductive odor of the sea," it becomes clear that Edna's attraction to Robert is only the outward sign of a profound discontent, and she begins to listen to an unknown part of her inner self that is stirring awake after years of sleep. Without realizing the gravity—and ambiguity—of her words, Edna tells a Creole friend that she would never sacrifice herself for her children: "I would give up the unessential, I would give up my money, I would give my life for my children, but I wouldn't give myself." The ominous implications of this confused distinction do not emerge until much later.

As Edna gradually becomes aware of the underlying self that is struggling to declare itself like the howl of a newborn infant, she begins to act out its seditious promptings. When she returns to New Orleans at the end of the summer, she stops being "at home" on Tuesdays to a stream of visitors who mean nothing to her. She flings

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off her wedding ring and tries to crush it, and she devotes herself with unaccustomed seriousness to her painting, which until now had been a trifling way of passing the time. In delirious defiance of everything her husband and his society hold sacred, she decides, while the rest of the family is away, to move out of her oppressively opulent house and live alone. In a tiny house of her own, no longer just a decorative part of her husband's property:

> . . . she had a feeling of having descended in the social scale, with a corresponding sense of having risen in the spiritual. Every step which she took toward relieving herself of obligations added to her strength and expansion as an individual. She began to look with her own eyes; to see and to apprehend the deeper undercurrents of life. No longer was she content to 'feed upon opinion' when her own soul had invited her.

And yet, when she drifts into an affair with the notorious roué Alcée Arobin, she feels little joy in this act of her own free will. She wants more than a philanderer can give her, and hopes to find genuine fulfillment with Robert Lebrun. But he cannot bring himself to transgress against the Creole code of chastity, and he runs away. With this rejection, Edna's illusion of freedom collapses. She cannot face the negligent life of meaningless affairs that will be her fate—"Today it is Arobin; tomorrow it will be someone else"—and on a cool spring day she sails over to Grand Isle and plunges naked into the sea that closes over her.

Unlike the many novels about a woman's yearning for self-fulfillment spawned by the feminist movement of our own time, *The Awakening* is almost forbiddingly objective. The nature of Edna's longing has been misunderstood by many of Mrs. Chopin's readers, for she never suggests that her heroine's marriage has been sexually inadequate. Edna is awakened not by her need for "perfect" sex but by her desire for independence, for a life free of the shackles of marriage and children. And Kate Chopin shrewdly perceived the flaw in Edna Pontillier's notion that she would give her life for her children, but wouldn't give "herself." Her illusion that the two are separate is part of the more sinister illusion that freedom can be attained through the reckless abandonment of all duties and obligations, especially those imposed by young children. Her unforgivable offense is not adultery but a dream of freedom which threatens the foundations of society not only by rejecting the role it assigns to

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women, but by rejecting the human burden of obligation. Kate Chopin sympathized with Edna Pontillier's craving for independence, but she also perceived its irresponsibility. She did not subscribe to the moral fallacy of the disconnected life.

In 1899, however, her readers missed the point of her cautionary wisdom, and took *The Awakening* to be a shocking defense of adultery. One reviewer blustered that the novel was "too strong drink for moral babes, and should be labelled 'poison.'" Another intoned that "it was not necessary for a writer of so great refinement and poetic grace to enter the overworked field of sex fiction," a genre that existed only in his overheated fantasies, and the *Atlantic,* which had published her stories, took no notice of the novel at all. The St. Louis libraries quickly acted on the scandal by banning the book from circulation. Mrs. Chopin was ostracized by polite St. Louis society, and blackballed for membership in the Fine Arts Club. She was deeply wounded by the general verdict throughout the country that *The Awakening* was morbid and disgusting, though it does seem odd, given what she knew about the Pecksniffian atmosphere of the time, that she was surprised by the hostile response. Her only consolation came in a letter from an English doctor, who applauded her courage in depicting the facts of life, and deplored the "accursed stupidity of men," which persuades young women that sexual passion is unvirtuous.

This was not much help to Kate Chopin on her home ground. When her publisher turned down a new collection of stories without explanation, she felt totally despised and rejected, and in the five years before her death, at the age of fifty-three, she wrote very little. In the new century her name was forgotten, and it was many years before she was newly discovered, by Edmund Wilson, who devoted some appreciative pages to her in *Patriotic Gore* (1962), his study of the literature of the Civil War and its aftermath. Academic hunters of lost writers had picked up the scent earlier, but it was Wilson's recognition that mattered.

But Kate Chopin came fully into her own when feminist critics, eager to redress the neglect of a pioneer, began reading *The Awakening* in the 1970s. It has by now been widely reprinted and has become a sacred text. Yet, like many novels that acquire an ideological halo, *The Awakening,* as a work of literary art, is often read too uncritically today. At times Mrs. Chopin relied lazily on heavy-handed abstractions that tell rather than show what she wants to say, such as the flaccid apostrophe about Mrs. Pontillier's "position in the

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universe as a human being" as she begins "to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her." This smacks of psychobabble. But these lapses are minor seen against her powerful evocation of Grand Isle and New Orleans, her psychological astuteness, her use of the sea as the novel's commanding symbol, at once sensual, life-giving, and destructive, and her profound sense of moral complexity. What she might have written if *The Awakening* had not been vilified as poison is impossible to guess, but one can only lament the silence that was not of her own making.

It would be difficult to imagine a woman and a writer who offers a starker contrast to Kate Chopin of St. Louis, Missouri, than Sarah Orne Jewett of South Berwick, Maine. They stood at the antipodes of female American experience in the late years of the nineteenth century, and they had little in common beyond the regional labels pinned on them by literary historians and their admiration for Flaubert. Though Mrs. Chopin, who began writing much later than Miss Jewett, studied the latter's stories for what they could teach her about style and technique, she could not have found them very useful, for the two women regarded the world in utterly dissimilar ways, and the experience and attitudes they brought to their work were as different as the landscapes of Louisiana and Maine.

Sarah Jewett was born and died in Berwick, and she could not conceive a life that was not rooted in her rural hometown, though she spent part of every winter in Boston and made several trips to Europe. A spinster who seems never even to have toyed with the idea of marriage, she was the daughter of a well-to-do doctor and a mother whose ancestors were sea captains and shipbuilders. Unlike Kate Chopin, who had no interest in the past, Sarah Jewett gave her strongest allegiance to the generations older than her own, for she grew up "with grandfathers and grand-uncles and aunts for my best playmates."

But she knew, with a sense of regret that informed every corner of her art, that the world of those grandfathers and grand-uncles was dying in her lifetime. The wharves in the coastal towns of Maine that, before the Civil War, had been thriving centers of shipping, were rotting, the up-country farms were being abandoned as the country moved westward, and the tranquil villages, already transformed by textile mills and railroads, were now being invaded by immigrants and summer tourists. As she wrote to Mr. Whittier, with a characteristically familial image, "Nobody has mourned more

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than I over the forsaken farmhouses which I see everywhere as I drive about the country out of which I grew, and where every bush and tree seem like my cousins."

It was to the crumbling past that she gave her tenderest loyalty, and her stories are filled with elderly widows and spinsters, with superannuated sea captains, and aged farmers and fishermen struggling to wrest a meager living from the hostile sea and the rocky New England soil. For these ancient survivors she felt an admiring affection that she could not bestow on her contemporaries. In her childhood she had accompanied her doctor father on his rounds of the isolated farms and coastal villages, and she thoroughly absorbed the speech, the eccentricities, the "elaborate conventionalities," and the sadness of a pastoral world drifting into anachronism. This loving intimacy became the lifeblood of her urge as a writer to hold that pre-industrial existence alive, in memory, against the corruption of time.

She found her cultural sustenance in the past as well. Her passionate faith in the harmony of man and nature, which meant nothing to the booming industrial life of America after the Civil War, was confirmed and nourished by her devotion to the transcendental themes of Emerson and Thoreau. Throughout her career, her work found a home in the *Atlantic,* which was owned and for a time edited by James Fields, the publisher of the Concord sages, of Longfellow and Hawthorne and Lowell and Holmes, in the days when Boston's cultural eminence was not yet threatened by upstart New York. And it was altogether fitting that Miss Jewett's closest friend was the publisher's widow, Annie Fields, fifteen years older than the young writer from Maine. At Mrs. Fields' tea parties on Charles Street, Sarah Jewett came to know those aged literary lions who were still drawing breath in the late decades of the century. She knew little about the younger writers of her time, but admired Willa Cather, who became a good friend in the last year of Miss Jewett's life, and it was very much in character that she worried lest Willa Cather, then working in New York on *McClure's* magazine, lose touch with her Nebraska childhood, if she became too involved in "the 'Bohemia' of newspaper and magazine-life."

There was never the slightest danger that Sarah Orne Jewett would lose touch with *her* roots, for they were all of what she was, the strength of her belonging to one place and to a time older than her own. As the lively old countrywoman Mrs. Fosdick complains in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896), "I see so many of these new folks

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nowadays, that seem to have neither past nor future. Conversation's got to have some root in the past, or else you've got to explain every remark you make, an' it wears a person out."

Sarah Jewett published over twenty books, the first, *Deephaven,* when she was twenty-eight, and most of the volumes, even those she chose to call novels, are gatherings of sketches and stories that had appeared in the *Atlantic* and, occasionally, elsewhere. She lacked whatever talent it takes to sustain the lengthy complications of a novel, and when she compelled herself to make the effort, she blundered. Her gift was for place and character, not plot, for the brief glimpse, the small incident that illuminates everything about a person, a family, a house, through the kind of detail and image that become acts of revelation. In "The Guests of Mrs. Timms," a fussy, pretentious woman is described as "a straight, flat little person, as if, when not in use, she kept herself, silk dress and all, between the leaves of a book." She could summon up the poignancy of a way of life, at once nourished and imperilled by the sea,with a few spare strokes in the opening of "By the Morning Boat":

> On the coast of Maine, where many green islands and salt inlets fringe the deep-cut shore line; where balsam firs and bayberry bushes send their fragrance far seaward . . . and the tide runs plashing in and out among the weedy ledges . . . . On the lonely coast of Maine stood a small gray house facing the morning light. All the weather-beaten houses of that region face the sea apprehensively, like the women who live in them.

In Miss Jewett's great triumph as a writer, *The Country of the Pointed Firs,* published when she was in her late forties, one feels only the faintest premonitory rustlings of the world beyond the village of Dunnet Landing. The life elsewhere, away from this small community facing the sea, seems at first to be entirely absent from the stories which compose this "novel," as though these humble old men and women, whose days turn in rhythm with the seasons and the light, are anemones fossilized in amber. But it is soon clear that even though their life seems to be going on in the present, it is the past that Miss Jewett is embracing in an eloquent gesture of farewell. This is never said, of course, since such literalness would violate the art of her elegy. But she succeeded, as we finally realize, in recapturing the past without a trace of false sentiment.

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The various stories that unfold in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* are given a tenuous unity by the nameless narrator, a young woman who arrives from the city to spend the summer in this peacefully isolated backwater, and learns to cherish its tranquillity along with its idiosyncratic and endearing inhabitants. The summer visitor lodges in the house of a widow, Almira Todd, who dominates the book as the embodiment of man's unity with nature, though she does not appear in each story. An herb-gatherer and gardener, she turns her "rural pharmacopoeia" into soothing remedies that even the local doctor respects. A massive woman of sixty-seven, with "the look of a huge sibyl," she tells her lodger one day about the man she long ago loved and lost because he was "far above her." (This is all we ever learn about class differences in Dunnet Landing.) As she talks, overcome by grief at this painful memory, Mrs. Todd acquires a classic majesty in the eyes of her listener: "She might have been Antigone alone on the Theban plain . . . . An absolute, archaic grief possessed her, she seemed a renewal of some historic soul, with her sorrows and the remoteness of a daily life busied with rustic simplicities and the scents of primeval herbs."

Yet Mrs. Todd is as down-to-earth as the herbs she grows, and she knows everything about everyone in the village; they form the landscape of all her days. She shares them with her lodger: the ancient sea captain whose memories have slipped a cog, and whose grave face is "worn into appealing lines, as if he had suffered from loneliness and misapprehension"; the shy fisherman who waits patiently for forty years to marry his beloved shepherdess; the lonely farm-woman who calls herself the Queen's Twin because she and Victoria were born on the same day. Mrs. Todd takes her lodger on a visit to her eighty-seven-year-old mother, a spry little woman who has spent most of her life in contentment on a tiny island across the water. Another day Mrs. Todd, her mother, and the visitor take part in a huge family reunion that seems to link the islands and the scattered farms into "a golden chain of love and dependence," and late in the summer they row out to the barren island where "poor Joanna," jilted by her lover, hid her sorrow and humiliation in the silent loneliness of an anchorite for the rest of her life.

Yet, though Dunnet Landing has borne its mortal weight of rejection and loss, madness and withered expectations and eccentricity, it does not remind us of the many rancorous American novels that expose the horrors of small-town life. Sarah Jewett is not Sherwood Anderson, and the people of Dunnet Landing, however odd

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they may appear, are not grotesques. With the affectionate grace and meticulous observation that shaped her style, Miss Jewett paid tribute to the precious individuality of these country folk, whose modest dignity and natural sense of community had not yet entirely succumbed to an increasingly impersonal industrial age. As one of Miss Jewett's innumerable bright old ladies remarks, "What a lot of queer folks there used to be about here, anyway, when we was young . . . . Everybody's just like everybody else now." And no one is any longer young. In all her work we can feel Sarah Jewett quietly recoiling from the bustling clatter of a modern world that is rapidly destroying the serenity of a life defined by nature. But it could not disappear completely as long as there were writers who understood the imperatives of memory.

It scarcely needs saying that with all her acutely rendered consciousness of the old-fashioned ways, Miss Jewett's Emersonian vision of man in nature neglected a less winning side of the nature of man. As F. O. Matthiessen, the great scholar of the American Renaissance, pointed out in his youthfully florid biography of Miss Jewett, published in 1929 when he was still in his twenties:

> She always paints the gentler emotions: blinding hates and jealousies, the fever of lust and the thirst of avarice never throb there . . . . There is a stark New England Sarah Jewett does not show, morbid, bleak, and mean of spirit. She looked at nature in its milder moods, and at mankind in its more subdued states of tenderness and regret.

It is so often summertime in her stories, or a benign day in autumn or spring. The crippling severity of the New England winter is rarely mentioned, and although she was by no means blind to poverty in such stories as "Going to Shrewsbury" and "The Flight of Betsey Lane," she did not often confront head-on the demeaning squalor and helplessness of the destitute, as she did, for example, in "The Town Poor." But even in that chilling story, she took the sting out by ending on a cheerful note of hope. The bitterness and suspicion that Mary Wilkins Freeman, a far less gifted writer of the same generation, revealed in her novels about small towns in New England are not to be found in Miss Jewett's work. As for passion, she ventured no further than the response of an adolescent girl to a dashing sportsman, in "A White Heron," written a decade before the

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Pointed Firs: "She had never seen anybody so charming and delightful; the woman's heart, asleep in the child, was vaguely thrilled by a dream of love." It is not surprising that in reading *Madame Bovary* she was struck not by Emma's sexual romanticism but by her rejection of the natural community to which she belonged. As Miss Jewett wrote to Annie Fields, Emma Bovary "is such a lesson to dwellers in country towns, who drift out of relation to their surroundings, not only social, but the very companionship of nature, unknown to them."

She wrote one more book, *The Tory Lover* (1901), after *The Country of the Pointed Firs,* but she was working against her grain in this romantic story about John Paul Jones in Berwick during the Revolution. A year later, at the age of fifty-four, she was violently thrown from her carriage when the horse stumbled, and seriously injured her head and spine. Though she lingered on for seven invalid years, she wrote no more.

In her lifetime Sarah Jewett was praised and cossetted as a perfect darling by such titans of literary Boston as Lowell and Holmes. But it was typical of Lowell's lofty astigmatism that he especially approved of her decision, as he put it, "to work within narrow limitations," and left it at that. As her books appeared, the reviewers almost invariably praised the perfection of her style, the purity of her language, her sweet and ladylike refinement and her humor. In her own day only Howells seems to have discerned how much she drew from "the very tint and form of reality," but he did not grasp what that aged reality meant to her, and how thoroughly, however uninsistently, she diverged from the literary givens of the time.

Sarah Jewett's work never suffered the brutal extinction meted out to Kate Chopin, but in the early years of the new century she was read mainly by those whose heads, like hers, were "full of old women and old houses," and their number was dwindling. Some of her stories have been standard models of stylistic perfection in school anthologies, and a few years after her death she was dubiously honored by Henry James in an "appreciation" so snarled in knots and tangles of circumlocutory wool that the one strand of unembarrassed lucidity can easily be overlooked: she had, James wrote, "a sort of elegance of humility." In the 1930s the influential left-wing critics had as little use for Sarah Orne Jewett as they did for Emily Post. V. L. Parrington called her a "bleached-out Brahmin," and Granville Hicks contemptuously dismissed her as "merely a New England

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old maid who believed in piety, progress, and propriety." The selection of her best work which Willa Cather had published in 1925 was long out of print until a paperback edition appeared in 1956.

In recent swings of the *zeitgeist,* Sarah Orne Jewett has, not surprisingly, been largely ignored by feminist critics, perhaps because her aged widows and spinsters are so cheerfully satisfied with their lot, and have nothing to rebel against. In any case, her devotion to the past could hardly endear her to militant crusaders for a liberated future. Perhaps the worst offense, on the part of academic critics, is to pigeonhole Miss Jewett as a regional writer, as though her genius was caged by geography. But neither Sarah Jewett nor Kate Chopin, who also has been labelled "regional," limited their thoughts or curiosity about human beings to the quaint and the picturesque, as that label implies. Different as they were—the one a modern woman before her time, the other a guardian of the past—they both knew that the truth of art, while necessarily drawing its strength from the writer's experience of a specific place in time, must also transcend it. In this view of literature they were out of step with their own age, but in the novelists of the century that began toward the end of their lives, they would eventually be vindicated.

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Rachel Berghash

AN INTERVIEW WITH CZESLAW MILOSZ

RB: Your recent book *Unattainable Earth* consists of a process which includes being in paradise, being expelled from it, and as you say in the book: "Some are born humanized, and others have to humanize themselves slowly." How do you account for that slow process that some people have to go through?
CM: It seems to me that every act of creative writing is a compensation for shortcomings, and that in order to be a good artist one should not be quite human. All art is a little suspect in that respect. These thoughts tortured Thomas Mann all his life.
RB: Have you made a decision to humanize yourself after all?
CM: No, not necessarily. I guess I tried to do that for many decades of my life.
RB: With any success?
CM: It is very hard to judge oneself. You know very well that we do not know our own virtues and shortcomings. It is not our business but that of the Last Judgement.
RB: There is philosophy in your poetry, and I wonder what you think of the philosopher A. N. Whitehead's notion that philosophy is akin to poetry and both of them "seek to express the ultimate good which we term civilization?"
CM: I have studied philosophy and various systems of thought which are in a way like constructions in poetry. We know that philosophy is not an answer to a search for truth; it may be very honest in its search but it is not a more certain way of attaining truth than poetry is.
RB: Are they similar in their search?
CM: In a way they are similar. Personally, I am not very much in favor of writing articles and essays and am looking for a shorter and more concise form of writing. Some of my essays have definite philosophical meaning. My book *The Land of Ulro*—with a title borrowed from Blake—is, as I consider it, a philosophical book. I am very grateful to philosophy because it exists, and I remember my

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Editor's Note: This interview was conducted at Czeslaw Milosz's home in Berkeley, California, for the program "A World Elsewhere," and was broadcast on WBAI-FM New York in three parts, June 25th, June 30th, and July 2d, 1986.

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classes in philosophy with gratitude. But philosophy for me is good in order to forget it.

RB: Like Kierkegaard who studied philosophy in order to abandon it.

CM: In a way, yes.

RB: Do you think that philosophy and poetry are on the path of examining the obvious?

CM: Yes. There are a certain number of questions which have been asked by philosophers for centuries and are undoubtedly related to some everyday observations of human beings. Sometimes you take obviousness and turn it into a philosophical question. There is a short poem of mine in this new volume entitled "Myness." One morning I was sitting in a university cafeteria, and I listened to voices around me. As a result I wrote the following poem: "'My parents, my husband, my brother, my sister.'/ I am listening in a cafeteria at breakfast./ The women's voices rustle, fulfill themselves/ in a ritual no doubt necessary./ I glance sidelong at their moving lips/And I delight in being here on earth/For one more moment, with them, here on earth,/To celebrate our tiny, tiny my-ness."/ This is a philosophical poem drawn out of obviousness. What could be more obvious than a conversation in a cafeteria?

RB: In the United States poets tend to center their writing on themselves. I don't have a sense that your poems are that way.

CM: Somewhere in Dostoevsky you read that what a man mostly wants is to talk about himself. I guess that this tendency is due to a large extent to extreme subjectivization of literature in the twentieth century, especially in the West. This subjectivization is not so strong in Central Europe, the part of Europe that I come from—Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary—because there it is counterbalanced to some extent by historical experiences; the individual appears upon the background of history of the twentieth century, and upon the background of history in general, and his tendency towards subjectivism is mitigated.

RB: I would like to subtitle your new book "The New Book of Wisdom." You have included in it, in addition to your own poems, various "inscripts" and poems from other authors that deal with significant questions and answers. What prompted you to gather these and bring them together along with your own writing?

CM: Your question is very interesting and pertinent. I have always looked for a more spacious form to express myself. Poetry seems to me a little narrow today in the sense that many techniques have been

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banned from it under the impact of looking for purity of lyricism; epic poetry, for instance, has been largely abandoned. In my new book I wanted to say as much as possible by mixing verse and prose, and by mixing quotations from poems and poems of other poets which I consider to be connected with the tone and thinking of the book. At the same time, as I mentioned before, I feel less and less inclined to write essays. It seems to me that there are too many words in articles and essays.

RB: What about novels?

CM: Novels are an anathema to me.

RB: From your own poems and the "inscripts" that you have included in your book, I gather that you think that the way to deal with sin is to have a prospective conscience rather than a retrospective conscience.

CM: Yes. There was a time in my life when I went through a very difficult period of constant retrospective thinking about my shortcomings, my sins and misdeeds in the past. A friend of mine, a follower of existentialist philosophy, told me that I practiced what in the middle ages was called *delectatio morosa,* a term used to describe the way in which monks used to think about their past misdeeds and sins, meditating on them for days instead of doing what was necessary at the present. She said that our past is not static and that it constantly changes according to our deeds at the present. The things that we do at the present throw a light backwards upon our previous shortcomings and deeds; every act of ours presently performed transforms the past. If we make use of them as a motoric force, for instance, that pushes us to do good things, we redeem our past and give a new meaning and a new sense to our past actions.

RB: Would you say then that the criterion of being good is striving to be better?

CM: I don't know whether we should think in these categories. Usually we are besieged by our past. We constantly think in terms of the past and the future. We visualize how we were and how we will be. We do not think very much in terms of the present.

RB: In your book you say: "Nature soon bores me . . . " and later you say: "After all, Nature was not the object of my contemplation. It was human society in the great cities of the modern era, 'the pleasures of the depraved animal,' as Baudelaire says." Is it human capacity to deal with sin that interests you?

CM: No, I said that the human world interests me more than the

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world of nature; maybe it is a heresy to say such a thing in America.
RB: Not in Poland?
CM: Nature in Europe lost the romantic appeal it had in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Mother Nature is not very kind. One of the writers whom I like and with whom I feel a certain affinity is Isaac Bashevis Singer. He is in a constant rebellion against God because of suffering—suffering of animals and human beings. I see Nature as a constant reminder of immutable laws of suffering and devouring—animals devouring animals. I keep a kind of a grudge towards Nature because everything in it which is akin to cruelty and harshness we see in the human world. This is extremely appalling to me. There is some hope of course that human beings might be kinder to each other than animals are, but it is a vain hope. In many cases human beings are worse, much worse.
RB: You think then of Nature in terms of animals rather than trees and mountains.
CM: It is very hard to think of Nature in terms of beauty alone. Nature has an enormous beauty, and I am very sensitive to it. But there is a sort of a monotony, a repetition of patterns in Nature, as opposed to the great variety of the human world which is constantly kaleidoscopically changing.
RB: In your poem "Poet at Seventy" you say that your happiness is to be alive. What accounts for that?
CM: That is a very Faustian poem about constant youth. Until now I have been very young in spite of my age, sort of wandering and wondering.
RB: In that same poem you say that you feel sorrow that your life is closing. Do you grieve your death?
CM: There is a fear of death I guess. When you are young you may be more fearful of death than when you are in advanced age, but undoubtedly there is a certain amount of grief when you are in advanced age because you are accustomed to look forward, to plan for the future, and you realize that you have little time—many plans will probably have to be suspended, though of course we never know the day or hour of our death.
RB: In "Poet at Seventy" you also say: "and all your wisdom came to nothing," and then you say that you are making order to oppose nothingness. It is an interesting contradiction.
CM: I don't know if this is a contradiction because form is a constant struggle against chaos and nothingness. Had I had wisdom I

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wouldn't need to constantly create form in order to combat chaos and nothingness. We are constantly threatened by chaos and nothingness because life as such is an enormous multiplicity. My personal feeling about the twentieth century is that we are submerged. The things that happened in this century in the sense of horror and heroism escape our thinking and formulations. The century is largely untold. The same applies to our human lives. We are in the power of forces which escape our words and our records. Maybe that is why today everybody wants to write a novel about their life. As far as form is concerned everything in human life is form or giving form; we enter into a relationship with the world primarily through language composed of words, or signs, or lines, or colors, or shapes; we do not enter the world through a direct relationship. Our human nature consists of everything being mediated; we are part of civilization; we are part of the human world. Writing is a constant struggle, an attempt to translate as many elements of reality as possible into form.

RB: What are your thoughts about the form of conduct, for example ethical conduct or heroic conduct?

CM: Action is probably important, but I am not a man of action and I shouldn't pronounce myself as such. In action there are also many delusions.

RB: I think of conduct in terms of motivational behavior. Socrates' death is an example of heroic conduct. Do you think that Socrates' death expressed more than could ever be expressed in writings of the Socratic dialogues?

CM: Socrates, with his life, wrote a kind of a metaphor. Undoubtedly we can find many other similar examples which have a sort of permanent existence in the life of mankind. The question is to what extent there is a mythical transformation of acts of that sort. Maybe mythical transformations are necessary.

RB: What do you mean by mythical transformation?

CM: The book of Job is centered around the suffering of an innocent man, and the meaning of suffering. Maybe the meaning of the suffering of Job is to create a parable—material for the Book of Job which transforms mythically the story of Job.

RB: Does the answer that emerges from the Book of Job, that we can only know fragments of reality while God knows the totality of reality, satisfy you?

CM: Yes. This is a question which I touch upon in my book, even invoking Orwell. I speak in my book about the question of the past. If the past exists only in human memories, or disappears with

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human memories, or if it exists only in records which can be very easily destroyed, then in fact all human beings and all the events which happened fade into a kind of mist and have no consistence, no existence at all. In order to imagine that the past is real and that those people who died, for instance, in the horrible conditions during the twentieth century existed, we have to assume a mind embracing everything, every detail that was, that is, and that will be, simultaneously. This means that Orwell, who was agnostic, kind of searches for a solution, and the only solution is an objective reality based on God.

RB: What moved you to write your poem "The Garden of Earthly Delights"?

CM: I wrote this poem as a result of seeing in Prado, in Madrid, the famous painting, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch. I was surprised by the very enigmatic character of that painting. What did the painter want to say? It is ambiguous. We do not know whether it is praise of the earth, or praise of eroticism, or fear of eternal damnation with a very ironic attitude towards earthly delights in the spirit of the fifteenth century. My interest in that poem says a great deal about my own ambiguity about the subject, and the present ambiguity of the twentieth century about it as well. The past, the Middle Ages for instance, had a very ascetic vision. But today we are very ambiguous. We don't know.

RB: In your book you say: "Do I love God? Or her? Or myself? It is interesting to me that saints, for instance, express feelings about their love for God so vividly in their writings. But I am puzzled by what it means to love God, which I understand only through actions.

CM: I understand this very well. It is a very old problem—how to separate our love for created things, or for the world as it is accessible to us through our senses, from the idea of God who is separated from the world. Isaac Singer is a kind of a pantheist and sees the world and God as identified. I find this a rather difficult issue to cope with.

RB: Your poem "Father Chomski, Many Years Later . . . " which I especially love, somehow speaks to that. You say that Father Chomski refused to bow to the world and you ask: "Did I toil then against the world/Or, without knowing, was I with it and its own?" Could you talk about the difference between you and him?

CM: We return to your first question. Father Chomski was an ascetic and a fanatic. A man who could certainly be admired for his inflexibility and his refusal to compromise with the world. I chose a

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completely different path and have been very often immersed in this so-called stream of life—very sensuous in a way, the opposite of asceticism. In that poem, which is sort of a question, I ask whether by doing that I went to the side of the devil, because the present world is a world of exploration, of great curiosity and of license; a world in which everything seems to be permitted. I was sufficiently on the side of the modern world to question myself.

RB: Are you on both sides of the barricade now?

CM: Yes. I am a man of contradictions, and I do not deny that. I have been translating the French philosopher Simone Weil who is a defender of contradictions, and I wouldn't like to pretend to have a unified vision.

RB: In your book you manifest a wisdom to differentiate between what is significant and what is trivial. Often it is our character that leads us to that kind of insight. Do you think that yours stems from character or from a gift?

CM: I think that we have to pay for every gift we receive, and so I am not very proud of my gifts because I know that one pays. If what you say is true, then it seems to me quite flattering, and accepting such flattering opinions I could be a very proud man. But my shortcomings create a necessary balance, so that in hearing your flattering remarks I don't puff myself up.

RB: Then you must feel that a payment for possessing gifts is all right?

CM: Yes, probably.

RB: In one of your poems you say that you don't tell about your payments to the envious. Do you want them to think that it comes easy?

CM: Let them. In a way I shouldn't be considered a man of talent in America because there is a certain idea of a writer, of a poet, in this country, which I do not fit: I have never been in a mental institution; I do not use drugs; I am not alcoholic (I drink but moderately); so I am probably abnormal.

RB: Do you think that one has to be emotionally sick to be a writer?

CM: No. I think that many people are emotionally sick and have tremendous emotional complications, but we don't know very much about them. With writers this somehow transpires, and people know about it.

RB: I am thinking of the contrast between Robert Lowell and yourself.

CM: There were moments when I envied Lowell. I would say: "Ah, he is clever; he has a breakdown, and they take him to a sanatorium

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where he can write peacefully; while when I go through a crisis I have to function normally."

RB: In the commentary to your poem "The Hooks of a Corset" you say: "I endow with a philosophical meaning the moment when I helped her to undo the hooks of her corset." Can you conceive of endowing meaning to that act while performing it?

CM: The question of a certain duality between our consciousness and our actions is a very interesting and a very tricky one. I know people who are so literary-minded that any action of theirs, even writing private letters, is done with the thought about the world of art. We can also imagine various physiological functions that are fulfilled accompanied by thoughts about their philosophical meaning. But going back to your quotation, I guess that if we are truly in love we don't have these thoughts.

RB: Can you conceive, for instance, of anyone contemplating a sexual relationship in order to get another person closer to God?

CM: I cannot see a conscious design of that sort.

RB: An unconscious design?

CM: Yes. There is a very interesting novel written by my cousin Oscar Milosz, who was a French poet, entitled "Amorous Initiation," published in 1910. It is a story about love for a beautiful courtesan which takes place in the eighteenth century in Venice. There is a gradual realization by the narrator and the hero of the book that physical profane love is a road towards the love of God.

RB: In your book you say: "And when people cease to believe that there is good and evil/Only beauty will call to them and save them/So that they still know how to say: this is true and that is false." Are we too weak to realize truth without the beauty of art?

CM: An orthodox theologian by the name of Sergius Bulgakov used to say that art is the theology of the future. I don't know if this is true. I am not very fond of what I would call a religion of art. In the twentieth century we have witnessed a general tendency towards a certain worship of art. Art enters as a substitute for religion, and I am very skeptical about that. But, undoubtedly, there is something which should be respected here—apart from snobbery, less lofty motives, egoistic motives, or artists who make much hullabaloo about their art—because in a world where there are no certainties or strong foundations for values, people turn instinctively to art as something divine, inspired maybe.

RB: What time and place are you transcending in your poem "The Hooks of a Corset?"

CM: The poem is about young ladies at the beginning of the twen-

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tieth century. In the commentary to that poem I use the expression "Do you want white peacocks?—I will give you white peacocks," from literature of that time in a so-called decadent style. A serious problem is raised here, and it is that we are always prisoners of style. I mentioned before that we create form, but form changes because the human world changes. If we look at the movies from 1919 we see that the women then were very different from the women today—even their bodies were different, because of fashion, style, and dresses. Those young ladies whom I describe were subject to the style of their epoch. The same goes for the various styles in painting and poetry. Our problem is that we do not see our style; we do not realize it. A hundred years from now, our dresses, our fashions, and our ways of thinking will be looked upon and maybe considered somewhat funny. In this prose fragment that I wrote there is a nostalgia, a longing, to communicate with human beings, with those ladies who had died long ago, without the intermediary of form and style.

RB: In that commentary you write about secrets and mysteries and a search for the Real. What is the Real in a nutshell?

CM: Searching for the Real is the same as searching for God.

RB: In that same piece you say: "Her flesh which has turned to dust is as desirable to me as it was to that other man. . . . " Do you in fact accept that?

CM: As I mentioned, that poem is an attempt to reconstruct the era around 1900. I was not alive then but I imagined walking in the street in Paris identifying myself with that man and that woman who are no longer alive. Philosophically, and in a certain mood of meditation, we can identify with other men. When Proust wrote about the past, all his loves and jealousies were transformed into art, into form. Art is distance and detachment. But in real life we are not detached; we are victims of our passions; we cannot identify with other men; we are jealous of them and are rather ready to kick them.

RB: In your poem "Esse" from your book *The Separate Notebook* you are in the Metro in Paris looking dumbfounded at the face of a girl. You say: "To have. It is not even a desire. Like a butterfly, a fish, the stem of a plant, only more mysterious." The girl leaves the train and you are " . . . left behind with the immensity of existing things." Was there a sense of frustration that led you to write that poem and a sense of relief after you wrote it?

CM: Undoubtedly a sense of frustration before I wrote it, but no feeling of relief after that.

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RB: What happens after you write a poem such as this one?
CM: As far as I remember, I jotted it down expressing my frustration and my longing without paying much attention to it. After a while that poem became very important to me because I noticed that I have expressed in it something essential to me.
RB: Let's take this experience as a paradigm. If the frustration is not relieved, how does writing affect you personally?
CM: We discussed the question of writing as fighting chaos and nothingness. After having written such a poem I am relieved for the day. I did my share of fighting nothingness and chaos. For one day that is enough.
RB: You have received the Nobel Prize and many other honors and awards. How does this affect you?
CM: Those things act on me in a very peculiar way. I am unable to change the opinion I have of myself because I received the Nobel Prize. Very often, when I am with other Nobel laureates, I catch myself thinking that they should be very dignified company. Then I suddenly recollect that I am one of them. The problem concerning this is a practical problem, namely that I would like to have my work assessed not on the basis of being a celebrity but on the basis of its value. I look for people who are on very close terms with me so that they would say frankly what they like and what they dislike.
RB: In the last section of your book you say: "Not to enchant anybody. Not to earn a lasting name in posterity." Is this a wish or a resolution?
CM: It is a good question. To be completely honest, I would like to enchant but a very selected group of people who are ideal readers in my mind, not the reading public at large. (There may be a kind of haughtiness in selecting a very few happy people who would be able to appreciate my work). But that wasn't what I wanted to say in that section. What I wanted to say is that if you are going after enchanting people, you may be a little inclined to make compromises, to be a follower of various fads of a given time. When I say "Not to enchant anybody," I mean that I follow my own need for order, for rhythm and form—here, now, before my own piece of paper—and I use them as weapons or as instruments against chaos and nothingness. "Not to enchant" is a concentration upon my own struggle, not upon my contact with the readers.

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George Watson

ORWELL AND WAUGH

At the safe distance of half a century or so, George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh look like reverse sides of the same medal, forever irreconcilable—left against right, secular against Christian—and forever loathe to be reconciled.

So they must have seemed even to one other. Exact coevals—they were born in 1903—they met only once, in 1949, when Orwell was dying. Only a few letters seem to have passed between them, composed in polite terms as to strangers. For some twenty years they had taken opposite sides, reliably and predictably, in the resounding issues of religion and politics. And yet there is evidence that each read the other with respect, even avidity, and occasionally sent copies of their most recent books as if somehow eager for comment and commendation.

Their contest of mind barely peeps above the surface of surviving documents. Some months before his early death in January 1950, Orwell agreed to write an article for *Partisan Review* on Waugh. That was in March 1949; the article advanced no further than a few notes, to be published posthumously years later at the end of his widow's four-volume edition of his work, *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters* (1968). The notes are mainly about *Brideshead Revisited,* Waugh's most recent full-length novel, though Orwell remarks in a letter that he is reading (or rereading) all Waugh's early works, even his biographies, and the task was evidently one he approached with enthusiasm. And yet the notes are sadly predictable in their dogmatism. Waugh was "about as good a novelist as one can be . . . while holding untenable opinions"—a good writer ruined, says Orwell, by superstition. The death of Lord Marchmain at the end of *Brideshead* inevitably repelled him, where a dying and seemingly unregenerate peer makes the sign of the cross, and the two lovers, though divorced, realize in a religious ecstasy that they can never marry. "The veneer is bound to crack sooner or later," Orwell remarks acidly about the scene. "One cannot really be a Catholic and grown up."

That is the secular side. For the reverse of the medal, Waugh had already reviewed Orwell's *Critical Essays* in the Catholic journal *The Tablet* (April 6, 1946), praising Orwell in distant and disdainful

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terms as representing "at its best" the new humanism of the Common Man. That Rooseveltian phrase was very much in the air on both sides of the Atlantic, and it was a populist view for which Waugh never troubled to disguise his distaste. "I do not presume to counsel my sovereign on the choice of her advisers," he once told a journalist who had rashly asked him how he was going to vote in a general election. But the review is not ungenerous. He aptly compares Orwell to Edmund Wilson, and one feels that Orwell's own formula could easily be turned back on himself: about as good a writer as one can be while holding untenable opinions. . . . Waugh especially admires Orwell's magnificent essay on the social implications of the vulgar English seaside postcard, "The Art of Donald McGill." But he conscientiously regrets Orwell's total incapacity to esteem or even entertain any hint of religious sentiment—all the more striking and regrettable, he argues, in a man plainly endowed with "an unusually high moral sense and respect for truth and justice."

The standoff looks complete.But it still may be worth striving, now that passions have cooled, to see the left-right medal of that contentious era as one, its opposite sides complementary as well as antagonistic. Like the American and the French, the English intelligentsia in that age was at war with itself: the screaming-point being reached in 1935–6, when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, and Franco crossed from Morocco into Spain to save a Christian land from Bolshevism and restore order, church and monarchy. Waugh and Orwell naturally took opposite sides on Ethiopia and Spain, but not on Hitler, for whom Waugh never showed a particle of sympathy. In fact when he joined a commando unit in 1941, Orwell remarked admiringly to Anthony Powell: "Why can't someone on the left do something like that?" Beneath their opposition there was always a powerful undercurrent of fellow-feeling. "Unlike a lot of people, I thought *Brideshead Revisited* very good," Orwell wrote to Julian Symons in July 1948, "in spite of hideous faults on the surface." Waugh, who was one day to admit those faults, had already read *Animal Farm* in order, as he explained in his diary (August 31, 1945), to spite his Communist cousin Claud Cockburn, who as a loyal Communist Party man had just warned him over dinner against reading Trotskyite literature. *Animal Farm* was evidently a pleasure to Waugh, not a duty, part of that pleasure being political, and there is an added spice to Waugh's enjoyment of a fiercely anti-Stalinist tale that needs to be pondered.

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The copy of *Animal Farm* that Waugh read in the summer of 1945 to spite his Communist cousin had been sent to him by Orwell himself, whom he had not yet met. In fact Waugh had just written to him as to a stranger—"Dear Mr. Orwell. . . . "—thanking him for his "ingenious and delightful allegory": his gratitude was all the warmer because, as he flatteringly remarks, he had tried to buy a copy and found it sold out. Authors like to be told such things. A second letter to Orwell is similarly formal, and only the third, dated July 17, 1949, breaks any ice: "Dear Orwell—Blair?—which do you prefer?" says Waugh, hesitating between Orwell's famous pen name and his real one of Eric Blair. And once again he has to thank Orwell for a new book, this time *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. He sounds grateful but cool. It had "failed to make my flesh creep," he reports politely—it was a phrase he was to repeat about it years later in his life of Ronald Knox (1959)—because it denied the soul and omitted all mention of the Church. And that, protests Waugh, is simply incredible. However bad in England things may be by 1984, he cannot believe that religious feeling would simply have died out. He then promises to visit Orwell with his friend Frances Donaldson and her husband, which he did. Lady Donaldson, a neighbor who was eventually to write his life, tells me that "nothing memorable happened" on that visit to a Gloucestershire sanatorium where Orwell in his last illness was taking treatment for tuberculosis—just polite conversation. But Malcolm Muggeridge remarks in Miriam Gross's *World of George Orwell* (1971) that he should have loved to see them together in the sickroom, and it is still open to anyone to write an imaginary conversation of the event. As Muggeridge says, it must have been visually if not audibly interesting, with Waugh's "country-gentleman outfit and Orwell's proletarian one, straight out of back numbers of *Punch*."

Their congeniality was, if nothing else, stylistic. The debonair style with which they both preferred to handle issues grave and grim is part of their legacy from P.G. Wodehouse, whose writings they both adored. In fact they exchanged hints for Orwell's own essay on Wodehouse, and years after Orwell's death, Waugh was to praise him in a broadcast for having generously helped to save Wodehouse from the disgrace of prosecution as a Nazi collaborator. Putting Wodehouse's gaiety to a grim purpose is the stylistic secret of their fiction, and it is a secret they shared. It is always hard to remember, between readings, that *Brideshead* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are funny books: one recalls only the gravity of

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their themes, never the gaiety of their prose, so that every rereading surprises.

More than that, they were both masters of a species of invective at once blunt and insidious, abusing with the quick penetration of the knock-out blow rather than the bruising weight of a bludgeon. "Pow, and you're down," Normal Mailer once remarked admiringly, in a televised interview, of Orwell's prose, imitating in a boxer's punch the flash of a fist you hardly see. It is a gift Waugh and Orwell shared. When Orwell calls the left of his day "Bolshevik commisars, half-gangster, half-gramophone, escaped quakers, vegetarian cranks and back-room Labour Party crawlers," or dismisses Marxist dialectic as a "pea-and-thimble trick," you feel but do not see the flash of the fist. Or when Waugh reviews Stephen Spender's autobiography *World within World:*

> To see him fumbling with our rich and delicate language is to experience all the horror of seeing a Sèvres vase in the hands of a chimpanzee. (*Tablet,* May 5, 1951)

One imagines two such masters of the merciless put-down studying each other through the English civil wars of the thirties intelligentsia with a mounting respect that no dogmatic divide could dim. If not soul mates, they were style mates. The fierce trenchancy that characterizes British literary life at its best—"British intellectual knife-throwing," an American once called it admiringly—never found finer exponents in our century. Sad that Orwell should be bedridden and dying when they met for the first and last time. They might have enjoyed each other.

There are profounder kinships. Orwell's discovery in Barcelona in 1937 that extremes meet, that fascism and communism are much alike, is one Waugh had already made for himself. The charge that he was ever knowingly soft on fascism is unjustified. His views on Ethiopia and Spain in 1935–6 were wrongheaded, most would say, but it is questionable whether fascism, in his own estimation, entered into the matter at all. His view of black states and the oppressions endemic to all primitive societies are comically presented in *Black Mischief* (1932). As a convert to Rome in 1930, he saw the Spanish Republic as bitterly hostile to the church he loved, which it plainly was. In any case, he had the deepest contempt for the facile conceptualizing that often passes for advanced thought. When there is an attempted coup in Ishmaelia in *Scoop* (1938), intellectual opin-

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ion in Harlem and Bloomsbury restates a scruffy little incident in a backward state "in ideological form":

> Smiles represented international finance, the subjugation of the worker, sacerdotalism; Ishmaelia was black, collective security and democracy and the dictatorship of the Proletariat was black. . . . A subscription-list was opened in London, and received support in chapels and universities; wide publicity was given to the receipt in Ishmaelia of three unused penny stamps addressed to the President by "a little worker's daughter in Bedford Square."

That charge against the intelligentsia is much like Orwell's in his celebrated essay on the literary thirties, "Inside the Whale" (1940), where he quotes a line from W.H. Auden's poem "Spain" (1937)—"The conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder"—remarking that "it could only be written by a person to whom murder is at most a word," adding that Auden's amoralism is "only possible if you are the kind of person who is always somewhere else when the trigger is pulled." That jibe at Auden's emigration to New York in January 1939 with Christopher Isherwood was to be echoed shortly afterwards by Waugh in *Put Out More Flags* (1942), composed on a troopship, where he calls them Parsnip and Pimpernel. Presumably Isherwood was Parsnip, as he had a face like that, and Auden Pimpernel, since he had saved Thomas Mann's daughter from the Gestapo by contracting a Platonic marriage with much the same honorable ends in view as the Scarlet Pimpernel. Running away from a national crisis was conduct that Orwell and Waugh saw as one.

The large political difference remains. But it may not be too late to argue that Waugh's reputation for right-wingery, which Orwell and many since have credited to him, has been a trifle overdone. In *A Tourist in Africa* (1960), for example, a travel book written long before hostility to apartheid was mandatorily fashionable, Waugh bluntly calls it "racial insanity," since it "fantastically choose[s] pigmentation as the determining factor"; and he calls black/white "a preposterous frontier." His mind was conservatively antimodern rather than right-wing. Still less would he have been at home today in the new right. Racism is dotty and "rather modern," he concludes, meaning Victorian, and his reasons show how distinct his view is from anything widely prevalent today. Waugh is against racism because he is *for* discrimination, and racism, in his view, be-

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ing a matter of severe contrasts—black or white, Jew or Gentile—does not discriminate enough. He believes in shadings and gradings. "Stable and fruitful societies have always been elaborately graded," he writes, so that the fatal error of apartheid is that it makes a single distinction and on one ground only—skin-color—and then elevates into a rigid legal system what should be a matter of personal inclination.

Orwell would not have put it quite like that. But his writings too show an organized retreat from the simple dualities of his youthful Marxism, especially that of bourgeoisie and proletariat. The first of his books to see print, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) is emphatic that social divisions are a matter of subtly graded hierarchies, like the gradations insisted on by the staff of the big Paris hotel where he once worked as a dishwasher. Such subtle divisions are there because ordinary people, even very poor people, demand that they should be there. Hierarchy is not imposed from above, but demanded from below: a fact that theorists of class conflict are powerless to understand and even noticeably bad at remarking on. The contempt of Waugh and Orwell for simplistic systems like apartheid and communism—black versus white, proletariat versus bourgeoisie— has nothing to do with egalitarianism. Neither believed that mankind was equal, or could ever be so, or would ever want to be so. All systems based on the idea of equality—the point might be expected in Waugh, but recurs even more forcefully in Orwell—break down in action. "Some animals are more equal than others," as the Stalinists put it in *Animal Farm* when they take power. The folly of Moscow or Pretoria, both would have agreed, lies in their determination to institutionalize differences where nature has given us only subtleties and compelxities. Marxism and racism are "rather modern," as Waugh put it disdainfully, as if conscious that the medieval schoolmen or Renaissance Jesuits he idolized would have seen no merit in either of them. They are bookish, theoretical, and what Orwell in "Inside the Whale" finely calls "largely based on a sense of personal immunity." Perhaps it is now getting easier to understand why Orwell was so anxious that Waugh should read his books: so anxious that he sent him copies, though to a stranger.

As novelists, however, Orwell and Waugh evolve not towards each other but, in technical terms, in opposite directions. Waugh's novels grow more realistic as he gets older, and Orwell's less so.

Orwell's fictional career began with several mediocre attempts at realistic fiction, starting with *Burmese Days* (1934), where he reused

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his experience in the Burma police, and it was only in the last six or seven years of his life that he discovered that his talents lay elsewhere: in polemics, above all, and in what Waugh, in his letter of thanks for *Animal Farm,* called "ingenious and delightful allegory." The term "allegory" is perhaps not entirely happy. What is in question here, to be technical, is something in the manner of what the French call the *conte philosophique,* for which there is strictly no English term. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* Voltaire's *Candide,* or Johnson's *Rasselas* will do as instances, and it is certain that Orwell profoundly admired Swift, as Waugh admired Voltaire. English fiction returns to its eighteenth-century roots, or one of them, with Waugh's first novel *Decline and Fall* (1928) and Orwell's late masterpiece *Animal Farm.* Characters are cut-outs, mental events are banned, and names like Miles Malpractice in *Vile Bodies* tend to describe character as lucidly as they might in *Pilgrim's Progress.* Waugh had seen the opportunities of that defunct literary species almost twenty years earlier than Orwell, but he had exhausted it, to his own satisfaction, before war broke out in 1939, so that *Brideshead* and the *Sword of Honour* trilogy (1952–1961) are firmly in a realistic tradition. Orwell saw Waugh's point rather belatedly, but his example must have encouraged him. In a wartime *Tribune* article on Smollett (September 22, 1944), he remarked that several English writers had recently "tried to revive the picaresque tradition," citing Waugh and Aldous Huxley—adding that the experiment had not been entirely successful, if only because they betray a certain strain in their "eager efforts to be shocking." I presume Orwell is using the term *picaresque* rather loosely here, meaning something like episodically adventurous. That fits Waugh's first novels—*Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies, A Handful of Dust*—well enough. To an age that had been reading Proust, Joyce, and Virginia Woolf, such books must have seemed startlingly diagrammatic and technically reactionary. But then Waugh's whole artistic pose, like his political pose, is reactionary. In fact his very first book, privately printed in 1926 when he was twenty-three is an admiring essay on what was then among the most despised and discredited of all schools of painting, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Why did British fiction suddenly revive the *conte philosophique* and its fierce, diagrammatic crudities of tone and substance? Anthony Powell, who encouraged Waugh to write his first full-length book, a life of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1928), has suggested that Waugh revived simplicity because he was himself simple:

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> He saw human beings not as a mass of contradictions but as a particular sort of person—a great nobleman or a poor scholar or a spotty-faced announcer from the BBC. That was all they were, and they had to go through life like that. (*Radio Times,* April 18-24, 1987)

This perhaps overlooks the protective coloring that genius finds to mask its sensitivity. "He was an extraordinarily uncomplicated man who saw life in very simple terms," Powell goes on. But simplicity, or at least the sort that scores in argument or fiction—such as seeing that fascism and communism are more like each other than either is like the civilization of the West—is an achieved state of mind, "costing not less than everything," as T.S. Eliot once said, and only highly complex beings arrive at it at all. In his autobiography *A Little Learning* (1964), Waugh remarks that at sixteen he noticed that his publisher-father, "whom I had grown up to accept with complete simplicity," was in fact a highly gifted actor in everything he did. Orwell's simplicity is like that too. In a famous utterance he held that good prose was like a windowpane, mattering not in itself but only by what you see through it. Simple . . . . But anyone who has ever tried to write prose like that, or to see human creatures in life or fiction with Waugh's clarity in *Decline and Fall* or *Vile Bodies,* will know how much clutter of mind has to be cleared away first. If Waugh and Orwell did not exactly despise the complexities of literary modernism, Joyce-style or Eliot-style, at least they recognized, and early, that such complexities were not for them. Orwell once remarked that Joyce's *Ulysses* made him feel like a eunuch at a singing lesson, and Waugh's artist-hero in *Brideshead* briskly calls modern art "bosh." Stupid people have believed such things about Joyce and the school of Picasso. But that does not mean that all who believe such things are stupid.

Seeing the proximity of communism and fascism took a kind of intelligence that Joyce and Eliot did not have, and one they might not much have respected.

That proximity is the conclusive point of *Animal Farm,* where the tale ends on a sudden vision of a resemblance, even an identity: " . . . already it was impossible to say which was which." *Scoop* had made that point, almost too flippantly to be noticed, seven years before. By a supreme irony Waugh was to repeat it, coincidentally, in the same letter to Nancy Mitford that bore the sad tidings of Orwell's premature death. That was in January 1950, when Europe was still reeling from the revelations of the Nazi death camps,

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opened less than five years before, and the voluminous confirmations of the Nuremberg trial of what war criminals had done there. Waugh already knew that Nazism was not a conservative idea but a false and perverted progressive idea, an idealism gone wrong. "Gas chambers were not a Nazi invention. All 'Progressives' believed in them, and called it Euthanasia," he wrote to Nancy Mitford, characteristically spoiling his point a little with hyperbole. (*All* progressives?) If he meant H.G. Wells and Havelock Ellis, who half a century earlier had proclaimed that socialism would require the extermination of the unfit by the state, then he was certainly right, and if he believed that Hitler's sources included such Victorian socialists, he is altogether likely to be right. To adapt the last sentence of Orwell's allegory, it is almost impossible to say which was which, so intimate are the links between the intellectual socialism of the last century and the ideological foundations of fascism in this one. A pity Orwell and Waugh had no chance to discuss such weighty issues when they met, for the first and last time, in 1949. On modern totalitarianism, there is a kinship of interest between them deeper than the ocean and higher than the stars.

So, too, is a theme that intensifies in their fiction in middle age, which I am tempted to call the agony of a lost Eden. The phrase smacks of Milton, and it might be objected, and against Milton's epic, that one cannot be said to have lost something one never had. But of course, as Milton knew, one can. In Waugh and Orwell, Eden is somewhere else, or somebody else's, or snatched at only for a moment, or only distantly felt and known. It is lost, so to speak, almost before it is found: it is certainly never retained. Winston Smith, Orwell's hero in *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* dimly knows there was once a free England before the Party seized total power, and he wanders off into the London slums to find echoes and memories of it. *Brideshead* too is like that, and it poses some embarrassments as a novel—or at least it is supposed to do so, for I have always suspected such critical embarrassments to be more ritual than real. The life of a great country house is not easily admitted by intellectuals to be fascinating, and true to form, Orwell, in his notes for the unwritten *Partisan Review* article, names snobbery and Catholicism the two driving forces in Waugh's book, implying that as a secular radical he reprobates one as much as the other. In a similar spirit, Kingsley Amis remarked in a recent interview how much he detested the novel, though he self-betrayingly added that he often reread it. "Nobs' appeal," he said, "the appeal of nobs."

So why is it reread? Orwell offers the beginnings of an answer

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in his notes: "Waugh's loyalty is to a form of society no longer viable, of which he must be aware." Of course Waugh is aware of it. That is the tragedy at the heart of his book. More than that, and far worse than that, he was aware that he could not have had it for himself even if it did still exist. It is difficult here to shut out of one's mind the well-known pictures of Waugh in his last years, in one or another of the modest country houses he bought for himself, forever trying to look like a country gentleman and forever (as a friend once remarked) looking like a bookie. That is the comic side of his social tragedy. But his point runs sharper and deeper. As the novel amply shows, those who want can't have and—what only makes it worse—those who have don't want. Lord Sebastian, who has the magnificent baroque pile of Brideshead as his home, detests it—"It's where my family live," as he says distantly—and drinks himself to death. His undergraduate friend Charles Ryder, whom he introduces into the enchanted worlds of the great English house and of Venice ("I drowned in honey, stingless"), would give all he ever had, and far more, to live in such high ceremonial heavens, and is forever shut out. It is impossible here not to remember about Waugh what everyone knows: that as a boy he longed to go to Eton, and did not; that his first (and aristocratic) wife left him after a year, and for an Etonian; that his own sojourns in a great Elizabethan house in Worcestershire as a young man, the guest of a friend, let him glimpse at a world of moats, battlements and rolling parkland from which in spirit he never recovered. "The smiling meadows of Worcestershire and the noble line of the Malvern hills that I love so dearly," he wrote from the tropic swamplands of British Guiana in January 1933 to Lady Dorothy Lygon, one of the family, missing a home that could never be his. He missed it all his life long.

It is easy to dismiss all this as snobbery: easy too, no doubt, to say that Waugh's head had been turned. But then anyone with a head at all ought to let it be turned once or twice, and falling in love with great houses and ancient traditions sounds like a fairly innocent sort of infatuation. Waugh often returns in his fiction to that lost Eden, which in an England that was once the world's first industrial nation is always pastoral. When the lovers awaken in the country under mistletoe on Christmas morning in *Vile Bodies* they hear church-bells ringing across the snow:

> Later they put some crumbs of their bread and butter on the windowsill, and a robin redbreast came to eat them. The whole day was like that.

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Waugh wanted every day to be like that. And if that is what Anthony Powell calls simple, long live simplicity. As Matthew Arnold once put it, echoing the dream of all industrial mankind:

> O Joy, o joy,
> For the humming street, and the child with its toy,
> For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well . . .

The best part of *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* Waugh told Orwell in his letter of July 1949, announcing his visit, was "the delicious conversation in the pub when Winston tries to pump the old man for memories of pre-revolutionary days." One might easily have guessed Waugh would like that episode best.

In a way, Orwell's point here is more interesting than Waugh's, and more interesting simply because he was Orwell. Everyone knows that conservatives are in love with the past: everyone expects it. It took an Orwell to see that radicals need to be in love with it too—and need it rather more than conservatives. "He who controls the past controls the future." A sense of history is a form of power, since men are guided and governed by a collective sense of what their nation means and has meant in the world. When Winston Smith and O'Brien pledge themselves to revolution against the dictatorship, the toast is not to the future but to the past. "The past is more important," as O'Brien puts it with mock gravity. We understand the world we are in, if at all, only because we understand where it came from. And it is only because we understand it, or think we do, that we aspire to change it. So radicals need the past not just as much as conservatives, but even more than they do.

At the age of twenty, Evelyn Waugh wrote a story for Harold Acton called "Anthony, Who Sought the Things That Were Lost." That is what Winston Smith does in Orwell's last book, when he walks into the slums of London to find someone old enough to remember an England he himself never knew. At the end of *Brideshead* Waugh's hero is defeated in a similar search, though not defeated altogether. Waugh glimpsed that resemblance himself, and he chided Orwell in his letter on *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with one of the most potent jibes he ever made: "Men who love a crucified God need never think of torture as all-powerful." That, at the end of Orwell's book, is just what Winston Smith has been forced to think: subjected under torture in mind as well as body, "he loved Big Brother." It is interesting, and in stereotypical terms highly surprising, that the

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conservative should be more optimistic than the radical. But *Brideshead* does not end in Orwellian despair. Its hero has lost wife, mistress, and even the cause he is fighting for, since the war against dictatorship lost most of its point for Waugh on the day Hitler invaded Russia. Even the great house he had hopelessly loved as an outsider has been ruined by military occupation, and the army that has ruined it, as he bitterly recognizes, is his own. "I have been here before" is his echoing cry, as in the deprivation of war and middle age he remembers his time with Sebastian twenty years ago: two youths in love, one clutching a teddy bear to recall the lost Eden of his infancy.

And so Charles Ryder, now a convert, goes to mass, at the family chapel he in agnostic youth had admired only as a work of art in a strange and alien style. To borrow Sebastian's words, he has buried something there and wants to find it. "I should like to bury something precious in every place where I have been happy," Sebastian once had told him after wine and strawberries on a summer hilltop, "and then, when I was old and ugly and miserable, I could come back and dig it up and remember." Charles is back to dig it up. He has lost everything and gained a faith, and in the chapel at Brideshead a flame burns for him, "farther, in heart, than Acre or Jerusalem." No wonder a fellow officer remarks how cheerful he looks when he comes back. Too late, perhaps, after the critical drubbing this novel has borne down the years for its snobbery of tone and preciosity of style, to rescue its claim to greatness now. Even Waugh regretted it, in part, when he came to revise it in 1960. But at least he could see, as Orwell could, that the task of our mature years is to forgive the follies of our youth: to forgive ourselves for loving too much, too often, and too soon.

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POEMS

Irving Feldman

POEM OF THE OLD AVANT-GARDE

Coming home, cut to pieces, but victorious
and looking forward—you write that, write it good—
after our rough times off on the frontier,
we met them going out the road we traveled back.
Oh, they were a cheerful bunch—and young, my god, young!
"Hey," they said, "your old king died or something years ago,
hardly anyone's left you could have known—and us,
we're on our way to do some fancy soldiering for
his son or his son's son, maybe, someone like that.
Boy, you oldtimers are going to have it good!
It's all *history* what you done—we learned it in school.
You're okay, you saved the country. They'll do right by you
—same as they will by us when *we* turn around."

So back we went and got paraded up and down.
Strangers shook our hands, strangers kissed our cheeks.
Strangers shouted, "Marvelous! Congratulations!"
Strangers whispered to their children on the street,
"See the fine old heroes! See them marching by!"
That was us: marching, marching, always "marching by"
—the Immortals of the month, the grizzled darlings
of the snotnoses who cranked the awe-machine.
And we, it shames me to admit it but
we gobbled it up, like we were good for nothing
except to blubber in public about "it's wonderful
to be back home" and "we're so grateful you're grateful."
And strangers took us out to see the monument we were,
and watched the teary, shining expressions cross
our scarred old faces when we saw what we'd become.
How happy they looked, making us the gift of ourselves
—sponsors of our last shape, our final future!
Then strangers walked us into the pensioned twilight
where we no longer knew ourselves . . . and nothing nothing
nothing came back . . . only this feeling of strangeness
that kept you company . . . with everything spellbound

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and going away because you'd come to a stop
. . . and then while you sat there becoming a stone,
you felt it—time was flowing over your hand . . .

You can take it from me, my friend: getting mad
is what will keep the sad songs out of your dick
—and your dick out of your hand . . .
Maybe our old guy was one mean s.o.b.
—who ever said that *we* were any bargain?—
and had nothing to give but his holding back.
But what good was everything we'd done for him if
we couldn't throw it in his teeth and hear him squawk,
"What in the hell ever made you think I'd pay up?
You did it—it's yours. Now live with it. Or don't."
So, what's it all come to anyway?
We saved his ass. He died in bed.
Or he got out of bed a thousand times more
and then one morning didn't. Just didn't.
And now no hand is left that's fit to lay
the "living laurel on their faithful brows."

Me? I'm re-upping in the second campaign,
marching away to those kids in the old outback,
where we're dangerous still . . .

Tell them our day will come,
the clarion's voice rinsing out the whole wide sky,
the wind stepping into the banners, and all the rest . . .
Till then they don't have to worry.
And if that's never, then fuck it, it's never.

ENTRANCES

megatherium
Jack Maximum
mixmaster?
mincemonster

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maunder
daunt
Oh hi!
Hi, I'm Kenneth Whimsy.
Hi, Kenneth, so good of you,
please come into my poem.
Hi, I'm in now.
Hi. May I bring you a cup of largesse?
Hi, I'm Mimsie Whimsy.
May I come in too?
Hi, Mimsie. Sorry this place is so empty,
I'm just moving in myself.
Shall I draw up this whisk broom for you?
Or this patent leather gladiolus?
Thank you so much,
but I'll just go and bring in little Quimsy W.
and big Jimsie.
Hi!
Hi!
Hi. Now let me try to guess who you are. You're . . .
Little Quimsy Whimsy!
Hi.
Hi!
And now that my poem is full of Whimsies
there'll never be any
old death
old prostheses
old poetry
old old age
old anything—ugh!
Hi, it's me again.
Hi right back to you.
Hi!
And we won't ever have to speak anything but Whimsian
good old funny words
exegesis
borscht
bazooka
tragedy
Hi!
Hi, little Quimsy.

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Hi.
heroic
crucifixion
Hammacher Schlemmer
plat du jour
Ode to Joy
Hi, everybody!
Hi.
Hi!
Everybody say Hi.
Hi!
Hi.
elevator shoes
delirium tremens
chortle thump smirk rapine pillage
fallout giggle slurp
pantheism
Angst and Sorghum
elephantiasis
Da Vinci
I never get tired of talking Whimsy.
Me neither.
Rrring! Rrring!
Drat, there's the telephone. Excuse me.
Hi!
Hi, I'm Kenneth Whimsy.
Hi, Ken, so glad you could come.
Oh you can call me Dave.
Hi, Dave.
Hi.
Haven't we met before, Dave. I mean
I have this feeling I know you.
And your voice, you sound so young,
like you're getting younger every time.
How do you do it?
Now who in the world is that scratching at the window?
I can't see, it's so dark out there.
Who is that?
Who are you?
Who's there?
Hi, I'm poem.

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Oh hi, poem.
Hi.
Well, just don't stand there like a stranger, poem,
come on in.
Is this a party or something?
Hi, everybody!
This is going to be *fun*.
delineation
dark

Marie Howe

THE GOOD REASON FOR OUR FORGETTING

Who would have the day back you saw coming in dreams
long before the actual stood like a flower

gone bad in the jar? The dreamed drunken driving,
steering from the back seat, or the garden of mazes

and he forever turning as you felt your way along
the broken bushes. Even the street of barking dogs

you finally walked through, empty-handed, pointed
to one thing. Who would have it back?

After the fact, you throw the stinking water out,
scrub the sink and turn into the new life

as if dreaming, knowing it is no dream, knowing
better. Although, some nights, you smelled it.

didn't you? A certain dissembling deep in his eyes
you could never reach, not with love

not with fearfulness. You smelled, you were almost
sure of it, something like flowers,

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the beast too long neglected. But that was before,
and long before you heard the story of the boy

and his father, how left alone for three days
they played cowboys, and how the father fell

on the first day, fell down and stayed there, playing
dead, the boy thought, and how he tried

to lift his father's head, tried to feed him
to make him stop, feed him breakfast, and how

he didn't stop, not for one minute, not once.
Who would have the day back when it happened to him?

Or the day before the day when he imagined himself
a boy, and deservedly happy?

Like the night, when the light from your lamp fell
on your face with what seemed an affectionate look.

Lee Gerlach

from "CITY NIGHTS"

17

In the deep ravine that spills out to the valley,
Furtive among black mounds of laurel,
The white doe wanders. More than once, startled,
I have come upon her at twilight or at dawn
Browsing among the flowerbeds, and her light thudding
Cups on the air, her scut bobs as she swings
Down into the brush. This is no forest retreat,
No Syrinx lounges in a covert here. Dry country.
Surrounded by city, this archaic place resists
Tomorrow. The owl hunts here. Kit fox and possum

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And skunk clamber through cover up to the lawns.
Children of moonwalkers watch from the dark door.
Here they come, shadows emerging from black ice,
Old fleece, a blur, a soft bristle sliding.
Hesitant, they gather at the edge of the clipped yard,
Stand there, alert and ancestral, waiting to speak.

Mary B. Campbell

FEAR OF TRAVEL

I'd be afraid to go to the desert,
That great ridged fingerprint
Of an indifferent God,
The land that actively abandons you
At every point.

Who would take care of me?
What if a sandstorm changed everything
During the night?

What could I make of such different life,
How could I ever remember it,
How could I tell you, afterwards?

The air was like the back room
Of a pizza shop in July
Crossed with the air of a laboratory.
The camel was like a horse
Which had just swallowed two swans.
The sounds were like paper
In a mechanical wind.
The sky was like the surface of a crucible
Full to the brim with a liquid that could kill.
There was no one there.
There was no one to talk to.
I wrote no letters because I forgot the alphabet,

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Your names, the names of things
In the moist world through which I could lie to you
About what was here, what was left
After everything had been taken away.

Judith E. Johnson

BODY POLITIC

you think yourself Aeneas, it may be,
and call me Dido: easy to leave. you claim
I hold you with intolerable demands,
say I fast net you whom your gods force free
and fire upon the planet to found Rome,
your *Pax Romana* bleeding from your hands.
I am no Dido though I am your home,
your vault which, once you join me, justly stands
communitas, the city's network. see:
that room, that arched chain, that linked self, that dome
you'd raise, I am. not elsewhere. here. demands
your flame an honest peace built honestly?
turn from mine, all Rome's roads will take false turns.
the *Pax Humana* burns as my hearth burns.

Diana Der-Hovanessian

COUPLES

Sunday afternoons along
the lake, Noah's twos
are strewn everywhere.
I stare at pulley-
ed swans who mate

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for life and walking couples
leaning into inverted V's.

Last night I dreamed again
of one-winged birds who
had to fly in pairs.
I was an ancient pihi
too. But the only one I cared
to fly with was left-
winged just like me.

Arthur Vogelsang

GLASS BREAKING IN THE NIGHT

She went there on a dare,
Like a hunter with no bullets in her camera,
Shy in the baked, expensive streets,
Cynical in the shade of the buggy, clean apartment.
Over the country the love-auto slowed each day (desert help)
So at last one would press and press to get to forty.
But got there.
There there was wonderful stationery among the bumpy whores
And a nice house on a urine-stained block.
There the helpful postman returned through the rich rock freaks
And the cracked teen freaks,
Keeping his own counsel.
(Who should throw a stone first?)
Or all was sun
Or in it, all aids
Warmed so the cure wouldn't be cold,
It'd be steaming going in, nice,
Like the needle not the knife, or acquitted revenge,
As if in our long dangerous day
The pants of any liar
Would always catch on fire.
There there was one vacant lot among big stuccos

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Where the brownness of the weeds was beyond compare, weeds
Deep so the tops of fruit trees were lily pads in an old harbor.
Straight across, the wooden house of Preston Sturges,
Moved three miles from the path of the second freeway ever.
Now thirteen people live there in thirteen beds but he never did,
He went to France and never returned.
Two doors down another house of wood and iron,
Green or fresh white, water sprayed everywhere,
At night the mean, thirsty animals come around there,
Prayers go out to them like glass breaking out not in:
Beautiful things, come in here and all my fear will be gone,
Just give me my stone,
Now I know there is joy in every kill,
And a movie's in here somewhere, betcha, betcha.

Susan Lasher

SOMETIMES A MAN TAKES A GOOD LOOK AT HIMSELF

Sometimes a man takes a good look at himself;
    or tries himself on like an old uniform
just to see if he still fits; or calls
    someone up, just out of the blue.

This, then, is the symptom of what great loss?
    Of time, of the cunning or crazy apes?
The past is never lost—and never found.

Now, we trust no man to speak of what he's seen.
    His own lousy childhood, for example, means
nothing, and each small love or fear blackens
    and thickens like tar in his small, cold heart.

The lie begins to form and takes the shape
    of the eerie double helix, wrapping the future
around and around itself, its lusty chemicals
    and everything there all at once. Who are you,

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who stands before himself, whose longing charts
the one good moment a man and woman had
before the world fell into disrepair?
You seek it again: love and its comforts,

the luminous, vague certainty of a life
after this one, a man walking around
in your shoes, a man who is all of you
and more. It is a dim photograph sent

from beyond: mother and father and child,
a small boy wearing your father's face.
If you are alone in your own life—
and you're not—what is it you and you

alone have suffered? When love and the species
flicker and go out, it's too late to ask:
What have I not done? What have I done?

Mark Jarman

STORY HOUR

What were they saying, the storytellers,
The newsbringers, the fabulists,
The gathered tribe of the living room?
Even in the stories they told,
If the pieces that came clear fitted right,
They did not remember this desperation
To know, that sent a tense child off
To a tense sleep, dropping him, helpless noun,
Through the smoky verbs of his body,
Throwing out images even more meaningless
Than a few sweet words

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Fitted together to predict a calm future,
The one that, for all their demurrals,
The grown ones had reached and told of
    In these stories at night.

The talk lived in the panel of wall
Between my bedroom and the living room,
The chalky membrane of plaster
    Deaf to the higher insinuations
And passing along chronicles and apologues
Of lower voices, full of lacunae,
Fragments in a burning hand written
On less than water—air—
Across the oval blank of my vision
    And funneling down the ear.

No trees outside except the distant eucalyptus.
Only the surf's voice at night.
Trees need wind, but on the stillest night
The waves spoke like leaves.
And, like a spasm of phosphor,
    Through the wall an adult confided
And another caught the glimmer,
Gave it heart and luster simply
By a laugh or beckoning denial or sighing
Affirmation. Outside the house
On its hill of clay and sand and dry grass,
    No trees. The waves were the leaves.

We lived in a lath and plaster house,
Mud and sticks, on a sandhill above the Pacific,
Two slabs of concrete and a wood floor,
    A tri-level,
    My bedroom on the lowest.
I knew where the termite built its palaces,
The king snake and the snail
Sheltered under ice plant and ivy,
The velvet ant took the sun

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On its blazing hair, and the black widow
Hoarded her power.
And I listened, when I went to bed,
To the strange language of adults
At story hour.

What *were* they saying, as they built
A wing on the night, closed off
As their work echoed back beyond the wall,
And the glaring work lights
Could only be guessed at, by the confidence
Of the faint voices? There was no groping
For words among them. It was the listener
Who groped, bound to bed
By drowsiness, breath balled up like a rag
To stop the loud heart.

The head, the room, the house, the world,
The journey out is a passing through doors
After the eyes open, if they open.
The stasis of sleep prevents this
And propels it spirally through dream,
Past the drowning urge
To keep the open book from falling face down.
The head, the room, the house
Begin where the human is a voice
And the voice a story and the story
An episode and the episode
A sandman's powder of mumbling and sighs.

The room, the house, the world
Can only be travelled this way. *Get up.*
Walk out the door, down the hall,
Up the stairs and into the living room
Where they still chatter. Their voices
Begin to sharpen like stones when a pool stills.

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Only the pool is your listening, the house's tumult.
Still it by entering. First, they will frown,
    Falling silent.
And their final smiles will nail the night shut.

    They always knew
    What their child wanted to hear
And never quite caught, slipping
Through the hazy light of their voices.
There was a real prize.
    Should they tell him?
"Those nights you lay awake
And we, having waited until you went to bed,
Began to share our news
    Or listened to a friend or stranger
Lay out a plot before us
Like a simple or intricate gift
Unwrapped on a coffee table
    Or extended across the living room floor—
Yes, you were missing something.
And what if an occasional clue,
A mere gnat of an episode, flitted
Into your hearing? So young then,
    You could only have built
    A dream or nightmare of it.

"It is too late to tell you
Any of what you missed, largely,
Because we have forgotten, and possibly,
Now you are grown, because you have heard it all,
    And repeated to yourself, wisely,
'This old story of his or hers—
I know it already.' And sometimes,
You have said so to us, cruelly,
And pushed it, this tale of our identities,
    Away like a hug or a kiss."

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Now I want to dream, but the velvet ant
Exits from a sugary ridge of sand,
A downy automaton, and the king snake,
Colder than the spikes of ice plant,
Makes a black track, snails smash,
Hurled against the garden wall,
A line of lighter fluid traces
Termites into their halls,
Fire follows. I want to dream
    All is forgiven and these bones—
The speaking of water
And the distance of eucalyptus—
Will make a past, parents, a child.
But I cannot dream beyond
    The creatures of the sand hill,
Velvet ant, king snake, snail, termite,
And in every hollow the black widow's
    Speckled daughters.

I believe there is a secret to life
Because my earliest memories are
Of hearing secrets muffled by a wall,
Coming to me in pieces like dust
Sliding down a shaft of sunlight.
    Only these came in darkness
And sparked and fused and radiated
Half-truths I made whole.

It is story hour on the hilltop.
The blue sea looks up at the sky.
The foxtails point with the breeze,
    The sinless, culprit breeze.
And everyone's gone, except
As this dream I wanted to dream.

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"You wanted to hear us assure you
That there was only one story,
And that story a promise
    Of never ending love,
    That you would love us
Just as a child loves his parents
And we would love you
In the same unchanging way
And each other, telling the same stories,
Long after you had grown and gone,
    To no one listening
    In his deserted room.
The one story that is never told
But thought of as if it had been
As a perfect story, none better,
    Is of a love nobody keeps."

Dreaming, I say to my mother and father,
"By the power vested in me
I pronounce you lost, irrevocably."
They laugh. I have no such power.
They are turned into eucalyptus trees
Rained on by the same weather
    On different continents.

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Seamus Heaney

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE

Reading T. S. Eliot and reading about T. S. Eliot were equally formative experiences for my generation. One of the books about him which greatly appealed to me when I first read it in the 1960s was *The New Poetic* by the New Zealand poet and critic, C. K. Stead. The title referred to that movement, critical and creative, which was instituted in the late nineteenth century against discursive poetry, and which Stead judged to have culminated in England with the publication of *The Waste Land* in 1923. One of his purposes was to show how in *The Waste Land* Eliot made a complete break with those popular poets of the day whom Eliot's contemporary, the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam, would have called "the purveyors of ready-made meaning"—bluff expositors in verse of arguments or narratives which could have been as well conducted in prose. Stead also provided instruction and delight by sussing out titles and reviews of books which "the new poetry" was up against: such as Anna Bunston's *Songs of God and Man,* perceived by the literary pages to have "freshness and spirituality;" Augusta Hancock's *Dainty Verses for Little Folk* which were "written in the right spirit;" and Edwin Drew's *The Chief Incidents in the Titanic Wreck,* which "may appeal to those who lost relatives in this appalling catastrophe." These popular volumes (of February 1913) were possessed of a strong horsepower of common-sense meaning. The verse was a metrical piston designed to hammer sentiment or argument into the public ear. This was poetry that made sense, and compared to its candor and decent comprehensibility, *The Waste Land* showed up as a bewildering aberration. In fact, it was hardly available enough to the average reader even to be perceived as an aberration.

Stead also pointed out that the poem was therefore defended or promoted in terms of the public's expectations. Its first defenders

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Editor's Note: This essay is based upon the first of the 1986 T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures, delivered at Eliot College, the University of Kent. It will be included in *The Government of the Tongue. Selected Prose 1978–1987* by Seamus Heaney. Copyright © 1988 by Seamus Heaney. To be published by Farrar, Straus, & Giroux. Used by arrangement with Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, Inc.

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argued that if poetry was discourse that made sense, then *The Waste Land* was indeed discourse, except that bits of it were missing. Wrong, Stead averred. This poem "cannot be seen accurately if it is read as a discourse from which certain 'links in the chain' have been omitted." "No critic concerned primarily with 'meaning' could touch the true 'being' of the early poetry."

The Waste Land in Stead's reading is the vindication of a poetry of image, texture, and suggestiveness; of inspiration; of poetry which writes itself. It represents a defeat of the will, an emergence of the ungainsayable and symbolically radiant out of the subconscious deeps. Rational structure has been overtaken or gone through like a sound barrier. The poem does not disdain intellect, yet poetry, having to do with feelings and emotions, must not submit to the intellect's eagerness to foreclose. It must wait for a music to occur, an image to discover itself. Stead thus rehabilitated Eliot as a romantic poet, every bit as faithful to the processes of dream and as susceptible to gifts of the unconscious as Coleridge was before he received the person from Porlock. And so the figure of Old Possum, netted for years in skeins of finely drawn commentary upon his sources, his ideas, his criticism of the modern world and so on, this figure was helped to rise again like Gulliver in Lilliput, no longer a hazy contour of philosophy and literary allusion, but a living principle, a far more natural force than had been recognized until then.

When I thought of "the government of the tongue" as a title for this essay, what I had in mind was this aspect of poetry as its own vindicating force. In this dispensation, the tongue (representing both a poet's personal gift of utterance and the common resources of language itself) has been granted the right to govern. The poetic act is credited with an authority of its own. As readers, we submit to the jurisdiction of achieved form, even though that form is achieved not by dint of the moral and ethical exercise of mind but by the self-validating operations of what we call inspiration—especially if we think of inspiration in the terms supplied by the Polish poet Anna Swir who writes of it as a "psychosomatic phenomenon" and goes on to declare:

> This seems to me the only biologically natural way for a poem to be born and gives the poem something like a biological right to exist. A poet becomes then an antenna capturing the voices of the world, a medium expressing his own subconscious and the collective subconscious. For one moment he possesses wealth

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> usually inaccessible to him, and he loses it when that moment is over.

Poetry's special status among the literary arts derives from the audience's readiness to concede to it a similar efficacy and resource. The poet is credited with a power to open unexpected and unedited communications between our nature and the nature of the reality we inhabit.

The oldest evidence for this attitude appears in the Greek notion that when a lyric poet gives voice, "it is a god that speaks." And the attitude persists into the twentieth century: one thinks of Rilke's restatement of it in his *Sonnets to Orpheus* and, in English, we may cite the familiar instance of Robert Frost's essay, "The Figure a Poem Makes." For Frost, any interference by the knowing intellect in the purely disinterested cognitions of the form-seeking imagination constitutes poetic sabotage, an affront to the legislative and executive powers of expression itself. "Read it a hundred times," he says of the true poem. "It can never lose its sense of a meaning that once unfolded by surprise as it went." "It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events and ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion."

In this figure of the poem's making, then, we see also a paradigm of free action issuing in satisfactorily achieved ends; we see a path projected to the dimension in which, Yeats says, "Labour is blossoming or dancing where / The Body is not bruised to pleasure soul." And just as the poem, in the process of its own genesis, exemplifies a congruence between impulse and right action, so the poem in its composure and repose gives us a premonition of harmonies desired and not inexpensively achieved. In this way, the order of art becomes an achievement intimating a possible order beyond itself, although its relation to that further order remains promissory rather than obligatory. Art is not an inferior reflection of some ordained heavenly system but a rehearsal of it in earthly terms; art does not trace the given map of a better reality but improvises an inspired sketch of it.

My favorite instance of this revision of the Platonic schema is Osip Mandelstam's astonishing fantasia on poetic creation, entitled—since Dante was the pretext for the thing—"A Conversation about Dante." A traditional approach to Dante, naturally enough,

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might involve some attention to the logical, theological and numerological significances which devolve from the number three, there being three Persons in the Holy Trinity, three lines in each stanza of *The Divine Comedy,* three canticles in the whole poem, thirty-three cantos in each canticle, and a rhyme scheme called *terza rima.* All this can press upon the mind until Dante is gradually conceived of as some kind of immense scholastic computer, programmed by Aquinas, and printing out the triadic goods in response to whatever philosophical, metrical and arithmetical data it has been fed. Dante, in other words, is often studied as the great example of a poet whose tongue is governed by an orthodoxy or system, whose free expressiveness is under the strict control of a universe of rules, from the rules of meter to the commandments of the church. Now, enter Mandelstam. Nothing, he implies, could be further from the truth. The three-edged stanza is formed from within, like a crystal, not cut on the outside like a stone. The poem is not governed by external conventions and impositions but follows the laws of its own need. Its composition had all the spontaneity of a chain reaction, of an event in nature:

> We must try to imagine, therefore, how bees might have worked at this thirteen-thousand faceted form, bees endowed with the brilliant stereometric instinct, who attracted bees in greater and greater numbers as they were required . . . . Their cooperation expands and grows more complicated as they participate in the process of forming the combs, by means of which space virtually emerges out of itself.

This is extraordinarily alive and persuasive, one felicity in a work of disconcertingly abundant genius, the greatest paean I know to the power which poetic imagination wields. Indeed the tongue, which I have been employing here as a synecdoche for that same power, is analogous in this context to the conductor's baton as it is reimagined by Mandelstam. His *hommage* to the baton is too long to quote in full, but this extract should suffice to show how deeply structured in all our thinking is this idea of imagination as a shaping spirit that it is wrong to disobey:

> Which comes first, listening or conducting? If conducting is no more than the nudging along of music which rolls forth of its own accord, then of what use is it when the orchestra is good in itself,

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> when it performs impeccably in itself? . . . This baton is far from being an external, administrative accessory or a distinctive symphonic police which could be done away with within an ideal state. It is no less than a dancing chemical formula which integrates reactions perceptible to the ear. I beg of you not to regard it merely as a supplementary mute instrument, invented for greater visibility and to provide additional pleasure. In a certain sense this invulnerable baton contains within itself all the elements in the orchestra.

As ever, Mandelstam writes jubilantly and persuasively. Far from being perceived as the mouthpiece of an orthodoxy, Dante becomes for him the epitome of chemical suddenness, free biological play, a hive of bees, a hurry of pigeon flights, a flying machine whose function is to keep releasing other self-reproducing flying machines, even, in one manic extended simile, the figure of a Chinese fugitive escaping by leaping from junk to junk across a river crammed with junks, all moving in opposite directions. Dante is thus recanonized as the sponsor of impulse and instinct—not an allegory-framer up to his old didactic tricks in the middle of the journey, but a lyric woodcutter singing in the dark wood of the larynx. Mandelstam brings Dante back from the pantheon to the palate, subverts the age-old impression that his work was written on official paper, and locates his authority not in his cultural representativeness, his religious vision or his sternly unremitting morality, but rather in his status as an exemplar of the purely creative, intimate, experimental act of poetry itself.

All the same, as I warm to this theme, a voice from another part of me speaks in rebuke. "Govern your tongue," it says, compelling me to remember that my title can also imply a *denial* of the tongue's autonomy and permission. In this reading, "the government of the tongue" is full of monastic and ascetic strictness. One remembers Hopkins's "Habit of Perfection," with its command to the eyes to be "shelled," the ears to attend to silence and the tongue to know its place:

> Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb:
> It is the shut, the curfew sent
> From there where all surrenders come
> Which only makes you eloquent.

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It is even more instructive to remember that Hopkins abandoned poetry when he entered the Jesuits, "as not having to do with my vocation." This reveals a world where the prevalent values and necessities leave poetry in a relatively underprivileged situation, requiring it to take a position that is secondary to religious truth or state security or public order. It discloses a condition of public and private repressions where the undirected hedonistic play of imagination is regarded at best as luxury or licentiousness, at worst as heresy or treason. In ideal republics, Soviet republics, in Vatican and Bible Belt, it is a common expectation that the writer will sign over his or her individual, venturesome, and potentially disruptive activity into the keeping of an official doctrine, a traditional system, a party line, whatever. In such contexts, no further elaboration or exploration of the language or forms currently in place is permissible. An order has been handed down and the shape of things has been established.

We have grown familiar with the tragic destiny which these circumstances impose upon poets and with the way in which "ungoverned" poetry and poets, in extreme totalitarian conditions, can become a form of alternative government, or government in exile. I was struck, for example, to learn that lines by the poet Czeslaw Milosz are incorporated into the memorial to the Solidarity Workers outside the gates of the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. But I was stunned by the image which Andrei Siniavski provides of the subversive and necessary function of writing as truth-telling, when he tells how, at the height of the Stalin terror, Alexander Kutzenov used to seal his manuscripts in glass preserving jars and bury them in his garden at nighttime. It is all there, the suggestion of art's curative powers, its stored goodness and its ultimate appeal to "the reader in posterity." The scene has the perturbing oneiric reality of an actual dream and could stand for the kind of ominous premonition which a dictator might experience, waking in the small hours and remembering the reality of the poetry he would constrain.

For the moment, however, I am concerned with states of affairs less repressive and less malign. I am thinking not so much of authoritarian censorship as of an implacable consensus in which the acceptable themes are given variously resourceful treatments, and in which the felicity or correctness of a work's execution constitutes the conspicuous focus of attention for both audience and artist. It is not right to assume that such conditions always produce inferior art. As a poet, for example, George Herbert surrendered himself to a

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framework of belief and an instituted religion: but in his case, it happened that his personality was structured in such a way that he could dwell in amity with doctrine, writing a poetry which was intellectually pure, emotionally robust and entirely authentic. An unconstrained, undebilitated mind measured itself against impositions and expectations which were both fundamental and contingent to it. Its discipline, however, proved equal to its challenges, so that a pun on the word *choler,* meaning both outburst of anger and emblem of submission could hold the psychic and artistic balance; and a rhyme of "child" with "wild" could put the distress of his personal predicament in a divinely ordained perspective.

Moreover, what holds for George Herbert also holds for the T. S. Eliot who wrote *Four Quartets.* As C. K. Stead also pointed out, this was a poet very different from the one who wrote *The Waste Land,* one who turned from an earlier trust in process and image to embrace the claims of argument and idea. To this grave and senior figure, the example of Dante was also important, although his import was significantly different for Eliot than for Mandelstam. Both men, interestingly enough, were turning to the great Florentine at a moment of mid-life crisis, Eliot's first essay appearing in 1929 and Mandelstam's being written, though not published, in the early thirties. (One thinks again of preserving jars in the dark garden.) Mandelstam was interested primarily in vindication by language, Eliot in salvation by conversion. Eliot's essay ends with an evocation of the world of the *Vita Nuova,* of the necessary attempt to enter it, an attempt "as difficult and hard as rebirth," and bows out with the declaration that "there is almost a definite moment of acceptance when the New Life begins." Here, ten years before the *Quartets* began in earnest, Eliot's writing looks forward to the concerns of those poems. What obsessed Mandelstam and shook him into heady critical song—namely, the sensuous foragings and transports of the body of poetic language—hardly seems to interest Eliot at all. He is much more preoccupied with the philosophical and religious significances which can be drawn from a work of art, its truth quotient rather than its technique/beauty quotient, its aura of cultural and spiritual force. There is a stern and didactic profile to the Dante whom Eliot conjures up and, as he embraces a religious faith, it is to this profile he would submit in order that it be recreated in his own work.

The Eliot of *The Waste Land,* on the other hand, reproduced in his poem a sense of bewilderment and somnambulism, a flow of in-

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ventive expressionist scenes reminiscent of those which Virgil and Dante encounter in *The Divine Comedy.* In the *Inferno,* pilgrim and guide proceed among shades in thrall to the fates of which they have become the archetypes, in much the same way as Eliot's poem proceeds upon the eerie flood of its own inventiveness. But in the *Quartets,* Eliot has been born again out of the romance of symbolism into the stricter exactions of *philosophia* and religious tradition. The inspired, spontaneous, essentially lyric tongue has been replaced as governor by an organ that functions more like a sorrowful *grand seigneur,* meditatively, authoritatively, yet just a little wistfully aware of its lost vitality and insouciance.

That vitality and insouciance of lyric poetry, its relish of its own inventiveness, its pleasuring strain, always comes under threat when poetry remembers that its self-gratification must be perceived as a kind of affront to a world preoccupied with its own imperfections, pains and catastrophes. What right has poetry to its quarantine? Should it not put the governors on its joy and moralize its song? Should it, as Austin Clarke said in another context, take the clapper from the bell of rhyme? Should it go as far in self-denial as Zbigniew Herbert's poem "A Knocker" seems to want it to go? This translation, in the Penguin Modern European Poets series, was originally published in 1968:

There are those who grow
gardens in their heads
paths lead from their hair
to sunny and white cities

it's easy for them to write
they close their eyes
immediately schools of images
stream down their foreheads

my imagination
is a piece of board
my sole instrument
is a wooden stick

I strike the board
it answers me
yes—yes
no—no

for others the green bell of a tree
the blue bell of water

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I have a knocker
from unprotected gardens

I thump on the board
and it prompts me
with the moralist's dry poem
yes—yes
no—no

Herbert's poem ostensibly demands that poetry abandon its hedonism and fluency, that it become a nun of language and barber its luxuriant locks down to a stubble of moral and ethical goads. Ostensibly too, it would depose the tongue because of its cavalier indulgence and send in as governor of the estate of poetry a Malvolio with a stick. It would castigate the entrancements of poetry, substituting in their stead a roundhead's plainspoken counsel. Yet oddly, without the fluent evocation of bells and gardens and trees and all those things which it explicitly deplores, the poem could not make the bleak knocker signify as potently as it does. The poem makes us feel that we should prefer moral utterance to palliative imagery, but it does just that, it makes us *feel,* and by means of feeling carries truth alive into the heart—exactly as the romantics said it should. We end up persuaded we are against lyric poetry's culpable absorption in its own process by an entirely successful instance of that very process in action: here is a lyric about a knocker which claims that lyric is inadmissible.

All poets who get beyond the first excitements of being blessed by the achievement of poetic form confront, sooner or later, the question which Herbert confronts in "A Knocker" and, if they are lucky, they end up, like Herbert, outstripping it rather than answering it directly. Some, like Wilfrid Owen, outface it by living a life so extremely mortgaged to the suffering of others that the tenancy of the palace of art is paid for a hundredfold. Others, like Yeats, promulgate and practice such faith in art's absolutely absolved necessity that they overbear whatever assaults the historical and contingent might mount upon their certitude. Richard Ellmann's statement of the Yeatsian case is finally applicable to every serious poetic life:

> He wishes to show how brute force may be transmogrified, how we can sacrifice ourselves . . . to our "imagined" selves which offer far higher standards than anything offered by social convention. If we must suffer, it is better to create the world in which we

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> suffer, and this is what heroes do spontaneously, artists do consciously, and all men do in their degree.

Every poet does indeed proceed upon some such conviction, even those who are most scrupulous in their avoidance of the grand manner, who respect the democracy of language and display by the pitch of their voice or the commonness of their subjects a readiness to put themselves on the side of those who are skeptical of poetry's right to any special status. The fact is that poetry is its own reality and no matter how much a poet may concede to the corrective pressures of social, moral, political and historical reality, the ultimate fidelity must be to the demands and promise of the artistic event.

It is for this readon that I want to discuss "At the Fishhouses" by Elizabeth Bishop. Here we see this most reticent and mannerly of poets being compelled by the undeniable impetus of her art to break with her usual inclination to conciliate the social audience. This conciliatory impulse was not based on subservience but on a respect for other people's shyness in the face of too much personal intensity: she usually limited herself to a note that would not have disturbed the discreet undersong of conversation between strangers breakfasting at a seaside hotel. Without addressing a question as immense and unavoidable as whether silence rather than poetry is not the proper response in a world after Auschwitz, she implicitly condones the doubts about art's prerogatives which such a question raises.

Elizabeth Bishop, in other words, was temperamentally inclined to believe in the government of the tongue—in the self-denying sense. She was personally reticent, opposed to and incapable of self-aggrandizement, the very embodiment of good manners. Manners, of course, imply obligations to others and obligations on the part of others to ourselves. They insist on propriety, in the good large original sense of the word, meaning that which is intrinsic and characteristic and belongs naturally to the person or the thing. They also imply a certain strictness and allow the verbs "ought" and "should" to come into play. In short, as an attribute of the poetic enterprise, manners place limits on the whole scope and pitch of the enterprise itself. They would govern the tongue.

But Elizabeth Bishop not only practiced good manners in her poetry. She also submitted herself to the discipline of observation. Observation was her habit, as much in the monastic, Hopkinsian sense as in its commoner meaning of a customarily repeated action. Indeed, observation is itself a manifestation of obedience, an activity

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which is averse to overwhelming phenomena by the exercise of subjectivity, content to remain an assisting presence rather than an overbearing pressure. So it is no wonder that the title of Bishop's last book was that of an old school textbook, *Geography III*. It is as if she were insisting on an affinity between her poetry and textbook prose, which establishes reliable, unassertive relations with the world by steady attention to detail, by equable classification and level-toned enumeration. The epigraph of the book suggests that the poet wishes to identify with these well-tried, primary methods of connecting words and things:

> *What is geography?*
> A description of the earth's surface.
> *What is the earth?*
> The planet or body on which we live.
> *What is the shape of the earth?*
> Round, like a ball.
> *Of what is the earth's surface composed?*
> Land and water.

A poetry faithful to such catechetical procedures would indeed seem to deny itself access to vision or epiphany; and "At the Fishhouses" does begin with fastidious notations which log the progress of the physical world, degree by degree, into the world of the poet's own lucid but unemphatic awareness:

> Although it is a cold evening,
> down by one of the fishhouses
> an old man sits netting,
> his net, in the gloaming almost invisible,
> a dark purple-brown,
> and his shuttle worn and polished.
> The air smells so strong of codfish
> it makes one's nose run and one's eyes water.
> The five fishhouses have steeply peaked roofs
> and narrow, cleated gangplanks slant up
> to storerooms in the gables
> for the wheelbarrows to be pushed up and down on.
> All is silver: the heavy surface of the sea,
> swelling slowly as if considering spilling over,
> is opaque, but the silver of the benches,
> the lobster pots, and masts, scattered
> among the wild jagged rocks,

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is of an apparent translucence
like the small old buildings with an emerald moss
growing on their shoreward walls.
The big fish tubs are completely lined
with layers of beautiful herring scales,
and the wheelbarrows are similarly plastered
with creamy iridescent coats of mail,
with small iridescent flies crawling on them.
Up on the little slope behind the houses,
set in the sparse bright sprinkle of grass,
is an ancient wooden capstan,
cracked, with long bleached handles
and some melancholy stains, like dried blood,
where the ironwork has rusted.
The old man accepts a Lucky Strike.
He was a friend of my grandfather.
We talk of the decline in the population
and of codfish and herring
while he waits for a herring boat to come in.
There are sequins on his vest and on his thumb.
He has scraped the scales, the principal beauty,
from unnumbered fish with that black old knife,
the blade of which is almost worn away.

Down at the water's edge, at the place
where they haul up the boats, up the long ramp
descending into the water, thin silver
tree trunks are laid horizontally
across the gray stones, down and down
at intervals of four or five feet.

Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
element bearable to no mortal,
to fish and to seals . . . One seal particularly
I have seen here evening after evening.
He was curious about me. He was interested in music;
like me a believer in total immersion,
so I used to sing him Baptist hymns.
I also sang "A Mightly Fortress Is Our God."
He stood up in the water and regarded me
steadily, moving his head a little.
Then he would disappear, then suddenly emerge
almost in the same spot, with a sort of shrug
as if it were against his better judgment.
Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,

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the clear gray icy water . . . Back, behind us,
the dignified tall firs begin.
Bluish, associating with their shadows,
a million Christmas trees stand
waiting for Christmas. The water seems suspended
above the rounded gray and blue-gray stones.
I have seen it over and over, the same sea, the same
slightly, indifferently swinging above the stones,
icily free above the stones,
above the stones and then the world.
If you should dip your hand in,
your wrist would ache immediately,
your bones would begin to ache and your hand would burn
as if the water were a transmutation of fire
that feeds on stones and burns with a dark gray flame.
If you tasted it, it would first taste bitter,
then briny, then surely burn your tongue.
It is like what we imagine knowledge to be:
dark, salt, clear, moving, utterly free,
drawn from the cold hard mouth
of the world, derived from the rocky breasts
forever, flowing and drawn, and since
our knowledge is historical, flowing, and flown.

What we have been offered, among other things, is the slow-motion spectacle of a well-disciplined poetic imagination being tempted to dare a big leap, hesitating, and then with powerful sureness actually taking the leap. For about two-thirds of the poem the restraining, self-abnegating, completely attentive manners of the writing keep us alive to the surfaces of a world: the note is colloquial if tending towards the finical, the scenery is chaste, beloved and ancestral. Grandfather was here. Yet this old world is still being made new again by the sequins of herring scales, the sprinkle of grass and the small iridescent flies. Typically, detail by detail, by the layering of one observation upon another, by readings taken at different levels and from different angles, a world is brought into being. There is a feeling of ordered scrutiny, of a securely positioned observer turning a gaze now to the sea, now to the fish barrels, now to the old man. And the voice that tells us about it all is self-possessed but not self-centered, full of discreet and intelligent instruction, of the desire to witness exactly. The voice is neither breathless nor detached; it is thoroughly plenished, like the sea "swelling slowly as if considering

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spilling over," and then, thrillingly, halfway through, it does spill over:

> Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
> element bearable to no mortal,
> to fish and to seals . . . One seal particularly

Earlier I noted that the habit of observation did not promise any irruption of the visionary. Yet here it is, a rhythmic heave which suggests that something other is about to happen—although not immediately. The colloquial note creeps back, and the temptation to inspired utterance is rebuked by the seal who arrives partly like a messenger from another world, partly like a deadpan comedian of water. Even so, he is a sign that initiates a wonder as he dives back into the deep region where the poem will follow, wooed with perfect timing into the mysterious. Looking at the world of the surface, after all, is not only against the better judgment of a seal; it is finally also against the better judgment of the poet.

It is not that the poet breaks faith with the observed world, the world of human attachment, grandfathers, Lucky Strikes, and Christmas trees. But it is a different, estranging and fearful element that ultimately fascinates her: the world of meditated meaning, of a knowledge-need which sets human beings apart from seals and herrings, and sets the poet in her solitude apart from her grandfather and the old man, this poet enduring the cold sea-light of her own *wyrd* and her own mortality. Her scientific impulse is suddenly jumped back to its root in pre-Socratic awe, and water stares her in the face as the original solution:

> If you should dip your hand in,
> your wrist would ache immediately,
> your bones would begin to ache and your hand would burn
> as if the water were a transmutation of fire
> that feeds on stones and burns with a dark gray flame.
> If you tasted it, it would first taste bitter,
> then briny, then surely burn your tongue.
> It is like what we imagine knowledge to be:
> dark, salt, clear, moving, utterly free,
> drawn from the cold hard mouth
> of the world, derived from the rocky breasts
> forever, flowing and drawn, and since
> our knowledge is historical, flowing, and flown.

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This writing still bears a recognizable resemblance to the simple propositions of the geography textbook. There is no sentence which does not possess a similar clarity and unchallengeability. Yet since these concluding lines are poetry, not geography, they have a dream truth as well as a daylight truth about them; they are as hallucinatory as they are accurate. They also possess that *sine qua non* of all lyric utterance, a completely persuasive inner cadence which is deeply intimate with the laden water of full tide. The lines are inhabited by certain profoundly true tones, which as Robert Frost put it, "were before words were, living in the cave of the mouth," and they do what poetry most essentially does: they fortify our inclination to credit promptings of our intuitive beings. They help us to say in the first recesses of ourselves, in the shyest, presocial part of our nature, "Yes, I know something like that too. Yes, that's right: thank you for putting words on it and making it more or less official." And thus the government of the tongue gains our votes, and Anna Swir's proclamation (which at first may have sounded a bit overstated) comes true in the sensation of reading even a poet as shy of bardic presumption as Elizabeth Bishop:

> A poet becomes then an antenna capturing
> the voices of the world, a medium expressing
> his own subconscious and the collective
> subconscious.

In conclusion, I offer two further "texts" for meditation. The first is from T. S. Eliot. Forty-four years ago, in October 1942, in wartime London, when T. S. Eliot was at work on "Little Gidding," he wrote in a letter to E. Martin Browne:

> In the midst of what is going on now, it is hard, when you sit down at a desk, to feel confident that morning after morning spent fiddling with words and rhythms is justified activity—especially as there is never any certainty that the whole thing won't have to be scrapped. And on the other hand, external or public activity is more of a drug than in this solitary toil which often seems so pointless.

Here is the great paradox of poetry and of the imaginative arts in general. Faced with the brutality of the historical onslaught, they are

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practically useless. Yet they verify our singularity, they strike and stake out the ore of self which lies at the base of every individuated life. In one sense the efficacy of poetry is nil—no lyric has ever stopped a tank. In another sense, it is unlimited. It is like the writing in the sand in the face of which accusers and accused are left speechless and renewed.

I am thinking of Jesus's writing as it is recorded in Chapter Eight of John's Gospel, my second and concluding text:

> The teacher of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery.
>
> They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery.
>
> In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.
>
> But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger.
>
> When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."
>
> Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.
>
> At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.
>
> Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"
>
> "No one, Sir," she said.
>
> "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of Sin."

The drawing of those characters is like poetry, a break with the usual life but not an absconding from it. Poetry, like the writing, is arbitrary and marks time in every possible sense of that phrase. It does not say to the accusing crowd or to the helpless accused, "Now a solution will take place"; it does not propose to be instrumental or effective. Instead, in the rift between what is going to happen and whatever we would wish to happen, poetry holds attention for a space, functions not as distraction but as pure concentration, a focus where our power to concentrate is concentrated back on ourselves.

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This is what gives poetry its governing power. At its greatest moments it would attempt, in Yeats's phrase, to hold in a single thought reality and justice. Yet even then its function is not essentially supplicatory or transitive. Poetry is more a threshold than a path, one constantly approached and constantly departed from, at which reader and writer undergo in their different ways the experience of being summoned and released.

Coming in

Partisan Review

- William Phillips on Kafka's Text
- Fiction by Doris Lessing
- Amos Oz on Nazi Power and Jewish Resistance
- Edith Kurzweil on the Holocaust and Primo Levi
- Eugene Goodheart: *Desire and Its Discontents*
- Fiction by Sergei Dovlatov
- Vassily Aksyonov on *Glasnost*
- Steven Marcus on Ernest Hemingway
- Nathan Glazer on Life in the Bronx
- Raymond Aron: *A Memoir*
- Stanislaw Baranczak: *On Polish History*

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Colette Brooks

NOTES ON AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY

It is daunting to explore a subject as vast as that of American iconography; it would seem that even the most perfunctory accounting would need in conscience to encompass such iconic elements as cowboys, Indians, Coca-Cola, the prairie, the flag, the Pilgrims, the work of Grant Wood, the Midwest, Rambo, Rocky, The Standard Oil Company, and, according to *The New York Times,* the Oreo cookie. There is, however, a means of abbreviating this otherwise endless litany. Considerations of American iconography raise questions not just of what we see but of *how* we see it, and this in turn involves investigation of attitudes and characteristics that cut across diverse areas of American experience. In this larger view, what is of interest are not the particular instances around which our collective reveries revolve, those images of galvanic power that constitute a cultural landscape, but rather what may well be termed a *mode of perception* itself; a mode that is characteristically American, that is imbued with and colors our dealings in the arts, sciences, and everyday life. It is a mode that found canonical expression in the lives and works of young white males on the Eastern seaboard in the eighteenth century, and it continues to influence the rest of us, wittingly or not, to this day.

Very generally, this American mode of perception can be said to be marked by a kind of pragmatism that reflects an uneasiness with the "pure" image or endeavor; a concern with landscape, scale, and precision put to "use," if only to enhance the rigor of the project itself; and a fascination with the world as refracted through the technologies and instrumentalities of the day. Though this pragmatic impulse is bolstered by the seeming authority of science, the sway of technology, the proven rewards of intelligence applied purposefully, it is essentially *talismanic;* wielded on one level as a way to ward off the threat of confusion, uncertainty, and loss of mastery over world and self.

In this light, the foremost American icon, should one wish to isolate such a phenomenon, must be considered *the map,* at once the

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Editor's Note: A version of this essay was presented in September 1986 at the Fourth Annual Conference of the National Association of Artists' Organizations.

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most literal manifestation of such an impulse and its most infinitely varying expression. The map can be found, metaphorically, in every area of American life, from nonfictional documents to the grids and parameters of contemporary art. It exemplifies that union of art and science, fantasy and fact, which characterizes the ontological contours of American life; it is both image and process, a means of structuring, moving through, and thus mastering time and space. The map promises that sheer possession of information which is seen as, and sometimes is, constitutive of power and mastery itself. (It is important, of course, not to confuse possession of information with possession of truth, nor is the efficacy of the one dependent upon the other. Early maps of the Americas were notoriously inaccurate, but the urge to label and thus to shrink blank areas served to stave off the anxiety of disorientation. This is, perhaps, the kind of comfort once afforded by the medieval appellation "There Be Monsters" that covered large areas of those strangely assertive early European maps.) The map represents the epitome of the empirical mind at work, fashioning a world made to its own measure. It is fitting that this American icon should so conspicuously lack the charged aura of the images enumerated earlier; for the matter-of-factness of the map mirrors precisely that dispassionate state of mind which invariably accompanies the acquisition and exercise of immense power.

> My imagination, it would seem, has its own geography.
> —Mark Tobey

In 1780 Thomas Jefferson, then governor of Virginia, received a request from abroad for a detailed sketch of his native state. In the resulting manuscript, *Notes on the State of Virginia,* Jefferson set out to provide a comprehensive overview of the state's topography, mineral wealth, laws, customs, and "infinitude of plants and flowers." What he actually depicts, however, is an emerging sense of estrangement, of remoteness from the Old World, of experience in the New World which is ultimately *incommunicable.* Cataloguing the state's botanical forms, for example, necessitates "adding the Linnaean to the popular names, as the latter might not convey precise information to a foreigner"; further on, he finds it impossible to reconcile "our own knowledge, derived from daily sight" with "European appellations and descriptions" that have no meaning in the New World. Finally, Jefferson furnishes what might be termed a paradigm of such dis-

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junction, as he speaks of the differing contingencies to which men are subject by virtue simply of the accidents of place:

> Our extremes of heat and cold, of 6° and 98°, were indeed very distressing to us, and were thought to put the extent of the human constitution to considerable trial. Yet a Siberian would have considered them as scarcely a sensible variation.

It is not, then, simply a matter of vocabularies that prove incommensurable; it is the very geography of experience itself that stamps and constricts the imagination. The Siberian's view of the world is of no matter to Jefferson's Virginian, for whom "the extent of the human constitution" is charted in accordance with parameters already in place at birth. *My imagination, it would seem, has its own geography:* viewed in this light, Tobey's remark can be seen as cautionary; an intimation of the limits and boundaries of consciousness of which we are scarcely sensible.

That consciousness should have such coordinates, that the range of our receptivity to new experience should be so swiftly constricted, is perhaps the rudest awakening the New World offers those who choose to explore it. (As the painter Clyford Still remarked, "To be stopped by a frame's edge was intolerable; a Euclidean prison.") Though it may be hard to go home again, as the old American adage has it, it is yet more difficult ever truly to leave, as is apparent in the earliest accounts of New World exploration. Christopher Columbus, writing his *Letter Describing the First Voyage* in 1493, observed of the native inhabitants of Hispaniola:

> . . . they are immediately content with any small thing, valuable or valueless, that is given them. I forbade the men to give them bits of broken crockery, fragments of glass or tags of lace, though if they could get them they fancied them the finest jewels in the world . . . they even took bits of broken hoops from the wine barrels and, as simple as animals, gave what they had. This seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it.

Aside from its intimations of exploitation, the passage is striking for its blithe assumption that European standards of utility and value are universal; that these indigenous peoples have only a cultural *tabula rasa* upon which the Old World can, and must, be writ once

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again. Columbus and his men have traveled thousands of miles, but for all intents and purposes they are still in Spain.

The inhibiting effect of acclimation upon one's perceptual powers is traced in an observation Jefferson records in the *Notes:*

> A change in our climate however is taking place very sensibly. Both heats and colds are become much more moderate within the memory even of the middle-aged. Snows are less frequent and less deep. They do not often lie, below the mountains, more than one, two, or three days, and very rarely a week. They are remembered to have been formerly frequent, deep, and of long continuance. The elderly inform me the earth used to be covered with snow about three months in every year. The rivers, which then seldom failed to freeze over in the course of the winter, scarcely ever do so now.

Though this is of course meant to be taken strictly as an empirical account of climatic change on the new continent, it can be viewed as a moving parable which traces the domestication of this New World within the memory of those yet living. In this sense, the struggle is not to survive but to keep the memory of a strange and once wondrous world alive; to resist adaptation to what was then forbidding, but thrilling; to what was then truly *new.*

> We shall delineate with correctness the great arteries of this great country: those who come after us will extend the ramifications as they become acquainted with them, and fill up the canvas we begin.
>
> —Thomas Jefferson

That Jefferson should liken his yet-unexplored country to a "canvas," a kind of huge sketch that subsequent generations were to flesh out with fact, provides yet further proof of his prescience; for this is an early delineation of what might be termed the two poles of the American imagination. "A fact is true poetry": this was how Ralph Waldo Emerson was to put it in 1841. Fact, poetry, the country as canvas: a willful mix of science and art, practicality emboldened by, infused with, vision, and the country itself the ground upon which these powers are to be invoked and applied. In varying degrees these impulses can be found in a number of notable Americans. The nineteenth-century landscapist and portrait painter Samuel Morse, who tinkered with electronics as an avocation, de-

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cided, for example, to invent something that might secure the income needed for his art; his creation, the telegraph, revolutionized communications and altered at a stroke our experience of time and space. (It did not, however, provide the financial security he sought, and he continued to tinker as his career as an artist fell into eclipse.) In the twentieth century Robert Moses, visionary of public works, transformed the face of New York and, indeed, the nation, with his extraordinary network of expressways, yet he could not drive a car; the man who almost single-handedly fostered the modern cult of the automobile derived only an aesthetic satisfaction from what he had wrought. And, of course, there is the career of theater artist Robert Wilson to consider. In terms of the scale of aspiration alone, the millions of dollars, thousands of man-hours, global satellite relays and such stipulated for his signature projects (the largely-unproduced *CIVIL warS,* for instance), Wilson can be characterized not simply as an artist but as an empire builder, a kind of master financier-engineer, a sort of Robert Moses, as it were. In these last figures, particularly, one finds a complex fusion of vision and will-to-power that is supremely American, marked not by the stormy megalomania incident to certain other cultures but rather by a cool resolution that can best be described as *methodical.*

Jefferson's notion of "correctness" as the informing principle of the "canvas" also can be sensed in American art, much of which is infused with a quasi-scientific rigor that springs from imperatives which are entirely self-imposed. The work of Jennifer Bartlett, for instance, is shaped according to exacting specifications that are prescribed by Bartlett herself; similarly, in the formal extremities of Wilson's work one senses a temperament at work whose impulses are pursued with an axiomatic thoroughness, unrelenting in pursuit of its "ramifications." One thinks also of the photographer Eadweard Muybridge, transplanted Briton, whose obsessive atomization of the mechanics of motion entitles him, perhaps, to be termed our first great formalist. Possibly the most intriguing of such figures is, however, John Wesley Powell, the nineteenth-century explorer of the country west of the One Hundredth Meridian. As leader of the U.S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, Powell grew intimately familiar with the then little-known territory he dubbed "the Arid land." Settlement in the West, he slowly realized, must not develop along traditional lines, homesteads divided (as in the East and Midwest) into quarter-section parcels of one hundred sixty acres; the arid lands required irrigation and thus

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guaranteed access to sources of water. "If these lands are to be reserved for actual settlers," he wrote, "the people should not be hampered with the present arbitrary system of dividing the lands into rectangular tracts"; actual topographical conditions must be observed and land laid out in irregular patterns if settlers were to live and prosper in the region. Though he campaigned tirelessly for this cause, urging corrective legislative action, Powell's radical designs were rejected. This is certainly due, in some measure, to the political realities of the day, but it is tempting to attribute the failure to a more fundamental fact: that at some point, possibly, this scientist/visionary forgot that he was at work on a *canvas,* forgot that his vision must conform to that canvas and not to actual conditions. Had he been born in Jefferson's era, Powell might well have been the one to draw the first tentative lines on the blank sheet; by the mid-nineteenth century, however, it was simply too late.

> Every day a new picture is painted and framed, held up for half an hour.
>
> —Henry David Thoreau

In 1893 the historian Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed that the American frontier had disappeared, its continuous recession ended finally with the lack of further free land. In a literal sense, of course, Turner was correct; by the end of the nineteenth century the continental United States had been fully explored and settled. If the frontier as a physical entity had vanished, however, the very powerful impulses it had served to channel were in time to find other means of satisfaction. Today, the thirst for novelty, the expectations inherent in the fresh start, the sensation of mobility itself are epitomized in the annihilation of time and space constituted by *television.* If, as some have suggested, technology is our new nature, then television is its showpiece, its one grand vista that dissolves and constitutes itself anew every half hour.

> . . . the least change in our point of view gives the whole world a pictorial air. A man who seldom rides, needs only to get into a coach and traverse his own town, to turn the street into a puppet-show.
>
> —Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Television, in fact, serves much the same function in American life as does the car; in terms of its greater ease of reach, one might consider it the cultural successor to that venerable but place-bound vehicle. Both the television set and the car are contemporary equivalents of "the coach"; each transforms experience into spectacle. That this represents a particularly distant relation to the world is, of course, inarguable, but this may constitute much of its appeal. Like the car, television privatizes experience; we watch it alone or at most with a handful of others. Fears that television exacerbates the isolation of modern life are, however, most certainly exaggerated, if not unfounded; television simply fulfills desires that Henry Ford, for one, astutely identified decades ago. In the 1940s, before Alaska and Hawaii were admitted into the Union, photographer Edwin Rosskam characterized the highway as "the forty-ninth state"; constituting, one would suppose, less an actual locale than a state of mind. Today, it is tempting to term television our fifty-first state, an integral part of our psychic landscape, an immaterial network which stands at the ready, like the road, twenty-four hours a day.

> MAP: A representation normally to scale and on a flat medium, of a selection of material or abstract features on, or in relation to, the surface of the Earth or of a celestial body
>
> —*Dictionary of Technical Terms in Cartography*

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. is inscribed with the name of every American serviceman known to have been killed in that conflict. Whether one regards this stark record as a testament to sacrifice or simply a litany of waste, the act of naming, in its startling specificity, infuses this black wall with indisputable power. It is the power of *fact,* the force of fifty-eight thousand names strung out in succession, and it effectively confounds response. What is delineated here is not the war but the condition of loss itself, a condition stripped of political, social, or historical reality, placed beyond contingency or accident of circumstance. The memorial wall resembles, oddly, those exhaustive colonial catalogues of all that was to be found in the New World—the "infinitude" of strange plants, flowers, and other forms of life which confronted those early settlers. Then, as now, fear and disorientation were held in abeyance by the calming effect of order,

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the power of a framework imposed through sheer force of will, through sheer accumulation of fact.

> It [the Grand Canyon] can be seen only in parts from hour to hour and from day to day and from week to week and from month to month. A year scarcely suffices to see it all. It has infinite variety. . . .
>
> —John Wesley Powell

The urge to exhaust knowledge of the given, to encompass as fully as possible that which inarguably *is,* seems to have arisen in response to the daunting immensities of the American landscape. The very scale of experience on the new continent confounded Old World conceptions of measure, proportion, and possibility. It took three hundred years, as historian Henry Savage has noted, simply to take stock of what the country contained—its flora, fauna, soils, topography, geography—and this constituted not intimate knowledge but cursory acquaintance. As though in response to the very enormity of this task, and in defiance of its difficulties, American ambitions have always been somewhat outsized. In the 1800s the painter and ornithologist James Audubon set out not simply to depict a representative sampling of bird life but to render every single species on the continent; he found four hundred eighty-nine. In our day, Jennifer Bartlett's *In the Garden* series depicts over two hundred views of that bit of French backyard, seen from a multitude of vantage points and perspectives. In these works, and others, it is as though tenacity of vision itself can lead to or constitute knowledge; as though such knowledge is to be earned through the very expenditure of attention and effort. Gertrude Stein, referring to her novel *The Making of Americans,* remarked: "I began to be sure that if I could only go on long enough and talk and hear and look and see and feel enough and long enough I could finally describe really describe every kind of human being that ever was or is or would be living." It is an archetypal American admission. One need only persist; at some point, should understanding remain out of reach, the encyclopedic impulse will itself suffice, cloaked in the conviction and authority that confound further questioning.

> Experience in its vital form is experimental.
>
> —John Dewey

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In the early nineteenth century, man's impact upon the natural world was thought to be so slight that Ralph Waldo Emerson could term it "insignificant," amounting to nothing more than "a little chipping, baking, patching, and washing." One hundred years later, the philosopher John Dewey would characterize man's relation to nature in terms befitting the twentieth century, in terms, that is, which would prove unrecognizable to the benign custodians of the earlier era. Emerson's "chipping" and "patching" would become, in Dewey's words "cutting, marking off, dividing up, extending, piecing together, joining, assembling and mixing, hoarding and dealing out." Both Emerson and Dewey must be seen as men of their times, of course, but they must also be viewed as Americans, representatives of a nation which, over time, forsook a humbler attitude towards the world for the more exuberant interventionism of which Dewey writes. The latter attitude colors all aspects of our national life, and its essence is evoked in one concept: *the experiment.*

The view that the world is to be worked upon, shaped and altered rather than simply contemplated in its quiescence might be said to be the hallmark of the experimental mind. It might also be taken to characterize attitudes that are often associated with art, as in Jasper Johns's dictum: "Take an object; do something to it; do something else to it." By these lights, the most influential American artist-figure of past decades might arguably be Robert Moses, the man who spent over fifty years doing "something" and then "something else" to New York City and its environs. In what can be called the greatest earthworks project of the era, Moses constructed over twenty-seven billion dollars' worth of public works—parks, parkways, bridges, expressways, and beaches. He recast the physical contours and boundaries of New York City. He built thirteen expressways in the city alone, at a cost of ten million dollars per mile. The scale of Moses's vision stood unsurpassed in its time; his Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, then the longest suspension bridge in the world, required that allowance be made during its construction for the curvature of the Earth, and his Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel was the longest underwater vehicular passageway in the Western Hemisphere. Robert Caro, Moses's biographer, notes that Jones Beach was "a barren, deserted, windswept sand spit when [Moses] first happened upon it in 1921 while exploring the bay alone in a small motorboat"; this unpromising spit became, in his hands, the great beachfront that now draws millions. What is remarkable about

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his feats, of which these examples represent just a fraction, is that they are the designs of one man who scrutinized the landscape with the transformative eye of the artist and turned the entire countryside into one large experimental site. Despite the sheer magnitude of his achievement, however, it is possible that what Moses actually built constituted only the roughest indication of what he was able to envision. As he rather wistfully remarked: "It is not to be wondered at that those who build highways and crossings should have a feeling of the transience of human affairs and a desire to pass on directions to future travelers."

> We rush like a comet into infinite space
> —Fisher Ames on the Louisiana Purchase

In 1917 the young American Randolph Bourne, observing the alacrity with which his educated contemporaries had embraced American involvement in the war, wrote that his was a generation of instrumentalists, enthusiasts trained in "the pragmatic dispensation," possessed of remarkable technical aptitude yet devoid of any sense whatsoever of the worth or very purpose of such facility. Consideration of values had been subordinated entirely to technique, to the cultivation and exercise of skill *per se.* "They are vague as to what kind of society they want," Bourne noted, "or what kind of society America needs, but they are equipped with all the administrative attitudes and talents necessary to attain it." Bourne's analysis of the technocratic mind remains as incisive as ever, and events since have reinforced this depiction of huge energies treated as ends-in-themselves, developed and deployed virtually *in vacuo.* The twentieth century, "the American Century," may well be viewed in the future as that period which forever affirmed the American capacity to surge forward without reflection. If so, the century will stand framed by two events that mirror the darker aspects of such blind urgency: the foundering of the American-financed Titanic in 1912 and the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger in 1986.

Each of these catastrophic events can be construed as epochal instances of aspiration gone awry, marked by startling similarities. Both the Titanic and the Challenger constituted the most advanced and highly-touted technological achievements of the day; each was seen as a breathtaking transcendence of man's terrestrial limitations. The loss of each ship precipitated the kind of deep shock that only

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catastrophe can administer to complacency. Each incident prompted a formal governmental inquiry, and similar contributory causes were advanced, among them a cavalier attitude to safety and a general feeling of invincibility. An excerpt from Senator William Alden Smith's summary address to Congress on the Titanic commission findings can stand, with minor amendment, as a comment upon the Challenger launch:

> Science in shipbuilding was supposed to have attained perfection and to have spoken her last word. Mastery of the ocean had at last been achieved. And overconfidence seems to have dulled the faculties usually so alert. With the atmosphere literally charged with warning signals and wireless messages registering their last appeal, the stokers in the engine room fed their fires with fresh fuel, registering in that dangerous place her fastest speed.

Yet another parallel can be found in the sense of technological intoxication that seems to have lain at the very center of each endeavor. The Titanic and the Challenger appear to have been built, fundamentally, because the technology was there, awaiting its realization, independent of any particularly thoughtful or purposeful application. Ironically, a trip on the Titanic was advertised at the time as a latter-day counterpart to the Pilgrims' voyage; the ship itself was held to be "redolent of the time when the Pilgrim Fathers set forth from Plymouth on their rude bark to brave the perils of the deep." (Though it is true that the Titanic carried a number of steerage passengers, it was intended to appeal to wealthy customers such as the Astors.) What was then simply a presumptuous claim must be seen today as something more; as a mordant allegory of what ensues when huge resources are expended not in the service of some larger end but simply for their own sake.

There is one further link between these two traumatic moments, and it is perhaps the most disturbing, for it seems to cast technological prowess in a wholly-redemptive light. Both the Titanic and the Challenger would have lain undisturbed for millennia on the ocean floor but for the development of the state-of-the-art sonar technology subsequently employed to locate the vessels. (The primary purpose of the Titanic expedition was, in fact, to test newly-developed Navy submersibles.) It took seventy-four years to find the Titanic twelve thousand five-hundred feet under the surface; it took just seven weeks to locate and retrieve the Challenger. For that mat-

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ter, the Titanic went down in two and some hours; the Challenger disintegrated in seventy-odd seconds, in a moment witnessed repeatedly the same day on television throughout the world. Our information as to what actually occurred during the Titanic disaster is anecdotal, the account of a handful of survivors; we have, however, instrumentation that has provided precise information about the Challenger's last moments, as excerpts from the Rogers Commission Report reveal:

> Just after lift-off at .678 seconds into the flight, photographic data shows a strong puff of gray smoke was spurting from the vicinity of the aft field joint on the right solid rocket booster.
>
> Main engines had been throttled up to 104 percent thrust and the solid rocket boosters were increasing their thrust when the first flickering flame appeared on the right solid rocket booster in the area of the aft field joint. This very first small flame was detected on image-enhanced film at 58.788 seconds into the flight.
>
> The first visual indication that swirling flame from the right solid rocket booster breached the external tank was at 64.660 seconds when there was an abrupt change in the shape and color of the plume.
>
> Within 45 milliseconds of the breach of the external tank, a bright sustained glow developed on the black-tiled underside of the Challenger between it and the external tank.
>
> At 72.124 seconds, a circumferential white vapor pattern was observed blooming from the side of the external tank bottom dome.
>
> At about the same time, the rotating right solid rocket booster impacted the intertank structure and the lower part of the liquid oxygen tank. These structures failed at 73.137 seconds as evidenced by the white vapors appearing in the intertank region.
>
> Within milliseconds there was massive, almost explosive, burning of the hydrogen streaming from the failed tank bottom and the liquid oxygen breach in the area of the intertank.

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> At this point in its trajectory, while traveling at a Mach number of 1.92 at an altitude of 46,000 feet, the Challenger was totally enveloped in the explosive burn.

This account, so factual as to be deemed definitive, tells us precisely why the Challenger exploded. On quite another level, it tells us nothing; it is as blankly informative as the Vietnam Memorial, as any of a number of documents Americans have amassed at troubling moments to ward off uncertainty, to subdue the unknown.

> Should you reach the Pacific Ocean . . . .
> —President Jefferson to Lewis and Clark

In 1806 Thomas Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark off to explore the unknown territory west of the Missouri River. He cautioned them to take care upon their departure from the United States; no one knew what dangers or difficulties lay in wait across that vast expanse beyond known borders. He began one paragraph of his written instructions with the phrase "Should you reach the Pacific Ocean. . . . " followed in the first edition by the editorial interpolation "one full line scratched out, indecipherable." We have no way of knowing what Jefferson crossed out, what he wished to articulate, or whether he thought better of the attempt; but the lone phrase which he left is infinitely touching from a contemporary perspective. *Should you reach the Pacific Ocean . . .* It is a matter-of-fact admission of possibility, doubt, and hope, and it can stand as an ageless expression of what is most truly American in this diverse and complex culture in which we are all so deeply implicated.

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Laurent Stern

LUKÁCS AT 103

What is alive today of Lukács's thought? Although he is an historical figure for contemporaries, when one of my more gifted students asked whether he should read Lukács, I told him that the role Lukács played for my generation now belongs to others. In our Golden Age of Philosophy a new lease on life has been provided for Marx studies in analytical philosophy and contemporary social science. A short list of these studies would include G. A. Cohen's *Marx's Theory of History* (1978); Alan Wood's *Karl Marx* (1981); Richard Miller's *Analyzing Marx* and R. P. Wolff's *Understanding Marx* (both 1984); J. Elster's *Making Sense of Marx* (1985); and the anthology edited by John Roemer, *Analytical Marxism* (1986). In these books Lukács's name is rarely mentioned, but it appears conspicuously in the bibliographies of writers for whom German philosophy before 1830 remains the last Golden Age.

Writers in the tradition of speculative German philosophy disregard work in analytical Marxism. The best and most detailed recent account of Western Marxism, Martin Jay's *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (1984), does not discuss any of the authors on my short list. Writers on Marx and Marxism in the analytical and the speculative traditions also reject the work done in the opposing tradition in other areas of philosophy. The speculative tradition in Marx studies inaugurated by Lukács may be disregarded, understood as a call for action, or relegated to the role of a cautionary tale.

Students in Western Europe in the late forties and early fifties were drawn to Lukács. We were in search of a respectable intellectual tradition that admitted a radical criticism of society. Here was a left-winger, who knew as much about classical philosophy and literature as any of our conservative professors. We were willing to forgive his obvious failings: he was as blind to the political consequences of his views as he was deaf to the art and literature of his own time. *History and Class Consciousness*, a collection of essays written between 1918 and 1923, supported a totalitarian vision of Marxism even before Stalinism came to power. His writings after 1923 revealed insensitivity not only to the work of Joyce, Proust, Kafka, Musil, and

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Beckett, but also to painting from Manet to Picasso and beyond. But all this could be disregarded.

When our teachers pointed to the totalitarian streak in Lukács, we talked about him as a victim of Communism's *apparatchiks* since at least the early twenties. When they spoke about the late Lukács's insensitivity, we talked about the early Lukács's aesthetic sensitivity. But we were not quite honest. We wanted a tradition, and for the sake of that tradition we were willing to disregard his obvious failings. There is always a price to be paid for holding on to a philosophical position or a given tradition. When the price exacted is too high, we reconsider our position. For me the price became too high when I realized that Lukács's views carry conviction only within the idiom of a bygone age.

Lukács's discussions of alienation and reification were most important to us. The two concepts were conflated in *History and Class Consciousness;* he became aware of the confusion much later. In our hands, their explanatory power was stretched beyond recognition. They served not only to understand our own situation as students transplanted from Central to Western Europe, but also to understand the failure of revolutionary movements in advanced industrialized countries. Although the structure of our master argument was simple, we did not notice that the understanding we claimed was vacuous. Our master argument warranted: (1) the stipulation of a fundamental distinction between what we think a given group needs and what that group actually wants; (2) the identification of a group's needs by a critic—henceforth called a critical theorist—on the grounds of reflection on the situation of that group within society; (3) the claim that the group pursues its wants rather than its needs because it is alienated.

The shallowness of this argument becomes clear only if the steps are made explicit. Its debt to the idiom of German idealism before 1830 is manifest. Its context antedates the advent of modern social sciences or even Hegel's or Marx's major discoveries. Its debt to the aesthetics of Kant and Schiller has been insufficiently appreciated. Walter Benjamin thought that Communists politicized aesthetics and Fascists aestheticized politics. The second half of this claim makes sense only if restricted to the first years of Italian Fascism, but the first half contains a deep insight.

According to Kant, aesthetic judgments are uttered with a universal voice: in saying that a given object is beautiful I enter the

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claim that all other reasonable persons would judge as I do. I need not ask whether they in fact judge as I do; a judgment that agrees with mine is imputed to them. But what if others disagree with my judgment? Then, there are only three alternatives: I hold on to my aesthetic judgment despite all disagreement; I retreat to a judgment of taste; or I revise my aesthetic judgment. A retreat to a judgment of taste—"it is pleasant *to me*" is one of Kant's examples; "*I* like it" would be my example—effectively removes that judgment from further discussion.

Only the first alternative is of any interest for the further development of my argument. I hold on to my judgment that claims universal validity notwithstanding the contrary judgment of others. According to my views, their judgment is mistaken, for it is based on what they wish and not on what they need. The fundamental distinction between what others praise and what they need was introduced by Schiller, and he had already concluded in *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Mankind* (1794–1795) that others opt for what they praise, because they are alienated from their real needs. Marcuse's readers noticed his intellectual roots were in Kant and Schiller; so are Lukács's.

"Render to your contemporaries what they need, not what they praise" was Schiller's advice to the ideal artist. This advice is in the background of Lukács's views as well as the Frankfurt School's critique of the entertainment industry and mass culture. This advice was also the keystone of our own master argument. The argument may be considered elitist or arrogant: as a critic I arrogate to myself knowledge of aesthetic value; as a critical theorist I claim to know what others need, regardless of their views on the matter. Both knowledge claims are based on my reflections that do not require confirmation by others, whose needs are in question. The disconfirmation of these claims by them merely reinforces my assumption that they are alienated from their needs. We have learned the three steps of our master argument from Lukács, but he did not invent them; they were available for more than a century before he applied them.

Now, as long as critics or critical theorists do not have the power to enforce their views, and as long as their activities are restricted to aesthetic matters, these views are harmless. It will be remembered that—according to Kant—the logical quantity of aesthetic judgments is singular: "this painting is beautiful." If you

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disagree, I may try to convince you, but there are no sanctions at my disposal to force adoption of my views. Given these conditions, aesthetic judgments require considerable courage. Had I just offered a judgment of taste and said that I like this painting instead of saying that it is beautiful, I could have saved time and effort in discussing the matter with you and trying to convince you. But, had I not tried to convince you, I could not have argued on behalf of values responding to needs rather than wishes. Only in arguing for an aesthetic judgment can critics and critical theorists issue an invitation to share values credited with responding to needs rather than wishes. Judgments of taste do not argue on behalf of such values. Of course, when Kant, Schiller, Lukács or other critical theorists offered aesthetic judgments, they did not have the power to enforce their judgments. Their courage in offering such judgments rather than judgments of taste deserves our admiration. Two additional circumstances brought about the change from admiration to condemnation. The first can be traced to Lukács and the second to our history since Schiller wrote in the late eighteenth century.

Class consciousness, according to *History and Class Consciousness,* is not the empirical consciousness of members of a given social class, rather it is the imputed consciousness ascribed to members of that class; it is the consciousness they ought to have, given the situation of their class within society. Examination of their empirical consciousness yields only an account of what they want: it does not coincide with the class consciousness ascribed to them, because they are alienated from their needs. The critical theorist establishes these needs based on the role each class plays within society. The familiar three steps of our master argument are in evidence. While Kant and Schiller wrote about art works and aesthetic judgments, Lukács writes about social classes and their role in history. Certainly, this is politicization of aesthetics.

There is an important difference between aesthetic judgments and the politicization of aesthetics. Kant, Schiller, critics, and critical theorists were powerless to enforce their judgments. They may have spoken with a universal voice and may have claimed that all reasonable persons ought to agree with them, but they spoke for a minority. They repeated their claims in spite of disagreement by a majority—a majority they knew they could not convince. We admire their courage for advancing their arguments in the face of certain failure. But if they had gotten power to enforce their claims

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about what others needed, our judgment about them would change. The intellectual heroes who once deserved our admiration would be perceived as petty tyrants.

History and Class Consciousness was written when Eastern European intellectuals began to acquire power to enforce their views about what they believed to be the real needs of others: they claimed to be acting on behalf of what they called "the masses of workers and peasants." They began building what was later described as presently existing socialism in Eastern Europe. Some became petty disciplinarians, others became dangerous tyrants. Lukács was critical of their methods, but not of their ultimate goals.

Few Western European or North American readers of Lukács shared his political views or his judgments about contemporary art and literature after the late 1920s. Some of these readers responded by trying to differentiate between an early or "good" and a late or "bad" Lukács. These efforts are pointless. The good and the bad, the insightful and the shallow are evenly distributed throughout his work. Others rejected his guidance in politics and literature, but they continued reading him even after his most misguided book of 1953, *The Destruction of Reason*. What did they expect to find in reading him?

Few of his judgments about art and literature are comments on individual works or what Kant would have called singular aesthetic judgments. If these judgments were collected for an anthology from the more than forty books he wrote, the resulting volume would be quite small. Early or late, he did not have a good eye for great art and literature or a good ear for music. Second-rate literary talents served his purposes as well as great poets. When other critics praised Rilke and Trakl, he celebrated Paul Ernst and Rudolf Kassner. Against this background, his later rejection of great twentieth-century literature should not be surprising.

His readers would not have taken him seriously as a literary critic, aesthetician or social theorist. They understood that he searched primarily for the normative and formative principles that provide the groundwork for creativity in literature and philosophy. There are works of art, how are they possible? There are philosophical doctrines, why are they necessary? What values inform art works or philosophical doctrines? His views deserve a hearing primarily for the questions he raised about the formative principles that are at the foundation of literary art works. Singular aesthetic judgments do not

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advance effort in this field. He inaugurated a genre criticism that his readers recognized as an original contribution.

The epos-novel answers the question "How can life become significant?" *(Wie kann das Leben wesenhaft werden?)*, and tragedy answers the question "How can what is significant become alive?" *(Wie kann das Wesen lebendig werden?)*. The formulation of both questions has two presuppositions. Forms of literature are forms of life, and the central concern of every literary form is an answer to the question *how to live?* Lukács did not formulate these presuppositions clearly, although they are fundamental principles in all his writings. What is implied in his early or late writings has a greater claim on his readers' close scrutiny than what he actually wrote. But to what field did he contribute? Ostensibly he wrote about literature, but his philosophy of literature was a philosophy of life and his philosophy of life a moral philosophy. Philosophy of life and moral philosophy both yielded and were supported by a substantive philosophy of history.

When Lukács claimed that he did *not* contribute to the philosophy of history, his view of this field was rather restricted. To be sure, he did not offer a causal theory explaining historical changes. In his early work he accepted Georg Simmel's and Max Weber's views; in his later work he adopted Marx's. His own contribution was primarily toward an understanding of historical change and not its causal explanation. Hermeneutics was the focus of his interests and did not change throughout his literary career. So, if we take for granted that changes in literary forms reflect changes in the social world—and this is a fundamental premise Lukács always accepted—the data for a philosophy of history that seeks understanding rather than explanation can be provided by reflection on either history or literature.

Contrary to his self-understanding, what he wrote must be understood as a substantive philosophy of history—which is characterized by the joint assertion of three claims: history is a connected series of events; it has a plot; and philosophers know that plot. The plot whose knowledge he claimed in *The Theory of the Novel* (1915) had narrower limits than in *History and Class Consciousness.* In the first book he found the Greek world of the epos as well as the future unavailable for interpretation; in the second book the limits of what is to be interpreted were extended in both directions. But what is the purpose of this hermeneutically-oriented philosophy of his-

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tory? If it is indeed produced by a philosophy of life and a moral philosophy, then its purpose cannot be other than a call for action and change. In the second book that call was clear: philosophy of history can only interpret the history of mankind; it is now up to the last social class, the proletariat, to liberate itself and at the same time to liberate mankind. But what change did he call for in the first book? Since in this book the future was unavailable for interpretation, the answer is less clear. But the references to Dostoevsky suggest that the change called for accords with the much later call to authenticity or to Rilke's call: you must change your life.

Although some writers pointed to a religious background in Lukács's urge for a change in both books, their religious connotation is doubtful. But there is a dogmatic element in these calls. For the diverse parts of his views in both books are held together by the master argument—which is undermined even by the mildest form of skepticism. It is easy to see this point. If a critical theorist claims that he has knowledge of history's plot and that he knows about others' needs, then he has good reasons for demanding action in accordance with these needs. Now, if others fail to act in accordance with these needs, then he can at best claim that they are alienated from their needs. Or he could say: the proletariat has been duped by the bourgeoisie. But for how long can you go on repeating these claims? If neither confirmation nor disconfirmation of your claims are acceptable, you will repeat them exactly as long as it takes you to begin doubting them yourself. Once you doubt them, the master argument will fail to convince you, and this form of the politicization of aesthetics is defeated.

What is alive in Lukács's thought, if we abandon the master argument? About three years ago I was asked to contribute to his one hundred-year anniversary celebration. At celebrations we accentuate the positive and leave unmitigated criticism for other occasions. Thus I was surprised that my criticisms were considerably more muted than those of my colleagues at the conference. I showed the usefulness of his distinction between narrating and describing—a distinction originally introduced in the context of literary works but useful in historiography. These distinctions and valuable insights deserve further development.

Other concepts do not survive the failure of the politicization of aesthetics. Unless the concepts of class and class consciousness are firmly anchored in empirical studies and in model-building in the

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social sciences, they are empty expressions of a critical theorist's wishful thinking and support only lazy teleological explanations. The master argument and the complaints about the alienation of others provide only comfort for critical theorists. Arguments on behalf of socialism, the concepts of alienation and exploitation, require grounding in the social sciences and not in philosophy. If you want to know about others' needs, sooner or later you must ask them about their needs. The call for action and change will be more effective if grounded in today's social sciences rather than in yesterday's speculative philosophy. In at least one respect, Lukács's substantive philosophy of history is indefensible.

He spoke about philosophy, music, art, literature and the sciences as "reflections of reality." According to René Wellek, this empty phrase occurs 1,032 times in Volume I of Lukács's *Aesthetics* (1963). Lukács's closest students and disciples asked their teacher: "If consciousness were really just this reflection, how would we understand that the realization of that which is formed in consciousness produces something new?" (See Agnes Heller, ed., *Lukács Reappraised,* 1983.) Their question demonstrates a remarkable independence of mind. After all, they were primarily nourished on a diet of early nineteenth-century German philosophy that did not encourage skeptical questions.

Science, art and philosophy—are they reflections of reality? Lukács's phrase must not be understood in its mechanistic sense; he did not speak about photographic images of reality. Yet this phrase implies that at a given time there is but one adequate reflection of reality. This view has been discredited at least since the 1860s. It is incompatible with our appreciation of the arts at least since the advent of Impressionism; it is inconsistent with the development of the natural sciences at least since the late nineteenth-century. Lukács was consistent; he rejected the arts of his time and expressed disapproval of Pierre Duhem's philosophy of science. Appreciation of twentieth-century art or the understanding of philosophy of science in Duhem's tradition lead to the claim that science, art, and philosophy are creations we accept or reject depending on the role they play for us. In the sciences we choose among incompatible images of reality depending on our needs and purposes; in the arts we choose among alternatives depending on the difference they make for us. Our scientific theories are underdetermined by the available evidence; our art works are left undetermined by the reality they are

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supposed to reflect. There are no uniquely adequate images of reality either in the sciences or in the arts. Philosophers for whom German idealism from Kant to Hegel is still the last Golden Age of Philosophy claim that they can evaluate these alternative images and arbitrate among them from a supposedly privileged standpoint. Philosophers who have learned from the development of the sciences and the arts since the late nineteenth-century no longer claim such a privileged standpoint.

I did not advise my gifted student to read Lukács. How would I advise other students? Of course, students interested in Central European intellectual history since the late nineteenth-century must read him. In addition to his works, the recently published *Georg Lukács: Selected Correspondence, 1902–1920* edited by Judith Marcus and Zoltán Tar (Columbia University Press, 1986) is a valuable source of material for the period. Also, there is one book by Lukács that I read only after the one hundred-year anniversary celebration. It deserves to be recommended to every doctrinaire student.

Lukács wrote it in 1968, and it was published in 1985 under the title *Demokratisierung heute und morgen*. This book attempts a history of the socialist movement between the 1920s and the late 1960s. Its author was a witness and active participant of that movement, and what he says often provides new insights. He argued that Stalinism was an *ad hoc* theory that grew out of practical necessities; had the vanguard party been guided by an adequate theory rather than building a theory on the basis of everyday needs, the horrors of Stalinism would not have occurred. In this book as in his earlier books he expresses boundless confidence in the powers of an adequate theory. Doctrines become dogmas, if we refuse to weigh the costs of our choices. His doctrines became dogmas, and in the end only he could believe them. Doctrinaire readers may learn from the cautionary tale.

Lukács admits that the military industry is the only industry in the Soviet Union that is efficient, because allowances are made for the quality and quantity controls of its "consumers," the military. He even takes a few timid steps in the direction of a reappraisal of the master argument. The next step would be an admission that this social system fails to satisfy needs, precisely because they are determined by administrative decisions and there is no incentive for asking others about their needs. Lukács still hopes for the system's internal reform. But there are no reasons to believe that such a reform is

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possible. For although it is a social system that came into being with a promise to provide for life, in its grim reality it has been efficient only in building an industry for death.

This account would be incomplete without a reference to a joint book by Ferenc Fehér, Agnes Heller and György Márkus, *Dictatorship Over Needs* (1983). These Lukács students no longer share their teacher's illusions. Their book provides a radical critique and by far the most original and persuasive account of what has been called "presently existing socialism" in Eastern Europe.

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VARIETY

David Lehman

FRESHMAN ENGLISH

I used to teach for a living. In addition to teaching courses in literature and creative writing, I usually taught at least one section of freshman composition each semester. As one semester came to a close, my students asked me to write a model essay for them—to show them how it was done. When I tried to meet this reasonable request, I found to my chagrin that my writing had been influenced in rather surprising ways by my charges. In the time-honored academic tradition, I had "learned more from my students than they had learned from me," as the following essay proves beyond the shadow of a doubt:

The books we have read this semester have many things in common, but the most important one is catastrophe. In some cases, it's the gods' fault, like Oedipus; in other cases, it's humans who are to blame, like Faust. But in every case catastrophe is the result, which is inevitable.

Goethe's *Faust* is the story of a partnership between the devil, Mephistopheles, and a member of the human race, Henry Faust, the scholar. Faust is not a happy man. Even though he believes that he will be satisfied by experiencing actions in his life (e.g. interactions with women and the observations of a tavern) he is so unhappy with life's slim benefits that suicide actually becomes a viable alternative, until he joins up with Mephistopheles. According to their agreement, if Faust becomes satisfied, his desires become minimal, if at all. He is too smart for his own good.

Another book we read this semester is *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Raskolnikov feels he is superior to human conduct, like Napoleon, so he kills two old ladies, one who deserved it but the other didn't. By the end of the novel he is wrong and in Siberia. If he was really superior that wouldn't be the case, but he must learn the hard way. Although it is true that some men are better than other men, they are only so much better, and after a certain point they are no better at all.

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On the other hand, the situation in *Oedipus Rex* is completely different. He can be blinded by rage, and commits two sins, parricide (killing your father) and incest. The question comes up, which is worse? The answer is parricide. The worst that can happen from an incest relationship is that it may cause a family member to become emotionally upset which is not against the law while parricide is. Also, someone who is practicing incest can walk away from it at any time while in parricide the victim is dead forever. I must agree with his sons by their decision to drive him out of the country, and I agree with Oedipus himself by poking his own eyes out.

Scientists claim incest can ruin your genes, although the Greeks didn't know that when the play was written. However, Antigone (his daughter) is a good example. However, Antigone (his daughter) is a good example. That is why I think Creon's punishment was too harsh, and he changed it by ordering his men to bury her in the vault outside Thebes. Although Antigone broke the law she is worthy of a better death than public stoning, he figured. The great humility that would arise from stoning is not deserving of Antigone or her family, who have suffered too much embarrassment as it is.

Antigone is only one of the many suicides in this course. Jocasta does it too, and Julien Sorel does not try to get off at the end of *The Red and the Black* by Stendhal. Julien was realistic and for this reason he was less naive than some of the others, including Candide, but then he also chooses to die, which I feel is a kind of suicide and immoral in my opinion. Although life may be difficult to bear, it is the ultimate, and there are no superlatives for it.

So we see that Faust, Raskolnikov, Oedipus Rex, Antigone, and Julien Sorel are all trapped in the same way. Some turn to suicide, some turn to murder or worse. It is ironical that Candide is the only exception because he goes through even worse catastrophes, such as the woman who lost half her buttocks, and Cunégonde who was beautiful but ugly when he married her, and Pangloss, and the many kings and dukes who have less than their poorest subjects, traveling around the world in Voltaire's *Candide* and winding up in his own backyard.

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BOOKS

THE POLITICS OF INTERPRETATION

THE CONTENT OF THE FORM. NARRATIVE DISCOURSE AND HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION. By Hayden White. Johns Hopkins University Press. $26.50.

Hayden White established his reputation with a large book, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). This was an ambitious attempt to discuss nineteenth-century historiography as a form of fiction. White, however, sensibly recognized that there is history outside of historiography, often preserved, for instance, in artifacts. Still, he argued that all history writing is a linguistic creation which reflects not only the attitude of the author but conforms to predilections for specific literary genres and tropes. White characterizes, for instance, four great historians of the nineteenth century: Michelet as romance, Ranke as comedy, Tocqueville as tragedy, and Burckhardt as satire, obviously modeling his classification on Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism.* Besides, the main philosophers of history are discussed as writing like Marx in the metonymical mode, like Nietzsche in the metaphorical mode, and like Croce in the ironic mode. We may object to some of his analyses; I, for one, am puzzled by the harsh treatment of Croce, but whatever one's objection may be, the book is a great achievement, the only substantial American contribution to the history of historiography I know.

Since then, White has published a collection of essays, *Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism* (1978), and now a new collection, called somewhat puzzlingly, *The Content of the Form.* This paradoxical title seems to mean only that White will discuss the contents of historiographical writings, conceived as a form. The series of essays here collected move from very general, abstract considerations on the question of narrative in contemporary historical theory, and of narration as representation of reality, to a discussion of the politics of historical interpretation. These three excellent theoretical essays are followed by essays on individual writers: the nineteenth-century historian Gustav Droysen's book *Historik,* Foucault's enormous work, Jameson's *Political Unconscious,* Ricoeur's philosophy of history in *Time and Narrative,* and finally, an essay titled "The Context in the Text: Method and Ideology in Intellectual History," which uses *The Education of Henry Adams* as a test case, in order to

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show the role of the context in understanding a specific text. He concludes persuasively that the relation is reciprocal. The text is in the context and the context is in the text.

I am puzzled, however, by White's interpretation of Henry Adams, which seems to me basically mistaken. He quotes D. W. Brogan's introduction to the 1961 edition of *The Education of Henry Adams* without trying to refute these comments, arguing that one could give a totally different account of what the text means and that Brogan's remarks are arbitrary. I do not see what are the grounds for dismissing Brogan, who makes sound comments that are by no means only a question of taste, as White suggests. For instance, Brogan is surely right that the *Education* is a record of disillusionment with the victorious Union, and that Adams was an artist in the sense that he knew how to compose his autobiography and how to tell his story vividly and personally, in spite of the concealment of the third person narrative. But White, I think, totally misinterprets Adams's mentality and historical position when he sees him as being more like Oscar Wilde. "The location of the artist's persona is in the precious, however serious, world of Oscar Wilde and Swinburne, whom Adams professes to admire." This is utterly mistaken: Adams many times emphasizes that he comes from the eighteenth century. Poetry played only a very minor part in his mental landscape. He did not admire Swinburne; he was rather puzzled and astonished by him when he had to listen to his tirades on a visit to Monckton Milnes's country house, *Fryston,* in 1862. There is simply no evidence that Adams was decadent in any sense of the nineteenth-century *fin-de-siécle.* His taste in poetry, as he tells us, was determined by Palgrave's *Treasury of English Verse* (1864) and was untouched by newer developments.

Nor is it correct to accuse Adams of intending the *Education* as a superior alternative to the *Confessions* of St. Augustine: "Its superiority consists, it is suggested, not so much in its worldliness (in contrast to the Christian mythology of Augustine's *Confessions*) as in its egotism (a quality Augustine seeks to erode in his own text as much by precept as by discursive example)." There is, however, no indication that Adams considered his own view of history and his egotism to be superior to St. Augustine's. Adams, after all, argued for a theory of history, which assumes a decline from the unity of the Middle Ages, admiringly expounded in *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres,* to the multiplicity and chaos of the modern age. The fact that Adams was critical or even rejected all philosophies of history, like Hegel's, Marx's and Darwin's, does not mean that he appealed only, as

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White suggests, to a canon of taste and sensitivity. It is not merely taste that supports the final conclusion of the book, which is completely negative, even nihilistic. Adams ends by appealing to Shakespeare's "the rest is silence." He sees a movement from unity to multiplicity, but holds out only a very dim hope that the mind would successfully react, "and nothing yet proved that it would fail to react, but it would need to jump." White belabors the idea of a switching of codes, suggested by Roland Barthes' pedantic spoof of pedantry, *S/Z*. The whole labored talk about codes seems, however, quite unnecessary, obscuring opinions which can be expressed in the ordinary language of literary criticism.

All the other essays have their virtues, particularly the early essays on the theory of historiography, which discuss acutely the differences between annals, chronicles, and historical narratives. White, to my mind rightly, rejects the purely static concept of history advocated by the *Annales* School, which, however, itself was frequently forced to have recourse to narration. And he is very good on the politics of historical interpretation, rejecting cogently the absurd denial of the existence of the Holocaust, and reflecting persuasively on the hardly noticed demotion since Kant of the category of the sublime in favor of the beautiful.

The essay on Droysen's *Historik* (1857), which could be translated as "historics," is a good interpretation of Droysen's early defense of the autonomy of historical thought and the inevitability of what Croce would have called "contemporary history." Droysen argues that the past can be known only and insofar as it has continued to exist in the present. All Droysen's arguments are conducted on a very abstract level. He hardly refers, at least in the published version, to any events or to any authorities except Aristotle. White knows, of course, that Droysen has written on Alexander the Great, on Friedrich the Great and Prussian history, and therefore places him within the loose and meaningless category of Marxism that represents historical writing as a "bourgeois science." A detail such as the word *Gleichschaltung*, with its present connotation totally absent at the time of Droysen's writing, used merely to suggest an attempt at reconciliation, seems to me an unfair distortion of Droysen's purposely universal and totally neutral and abstract account of the theory of history.

Foucault earns the subtitle, "The Historiography of Antihumanism," and is rightly criticized for his justification of the discourse of madness, criminality, and sickness, but praised for his rejection of continuities in history and for what is the dominance of the meta-

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phor of catachresis. White, however, makes much of the last work of Foucault, his *History of Sexuality,* called *La volonté de savoir* in French, showing that he is now no longer interested in defending his notions of historical discontinuity, rupture, and mutation, on which he had insisted in his previous works, and now has given a newly historical account of concepts of sex, beginning with the Greek exaltation of homosexuality. Still, the *History of Sexuality* is assumed to contribute to the "death of man," announced at the end of *The Order of Things.* Foucault's first and, to my mind, most impressive work is some kind of parallel to German *Geistesgeschichte,* different from it in the emphasis on complete discontinuity and by the inclusion of topics little known to most German historians of ideas: economics, law, penal codes, and so on.

White's essay on Jameson's *Political Unconscious* perceives it as an attempt to compose a Marxist version of Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism.* I feel that Jameson has nothing very new to say, except to embrace Marxism, interpreted in the terms of Sartre and Althusser, as a promise for a very distant future.

The essay on Paul Ricoeur is largely an exposition of the first two volumes of *Temps et récit,* which White considers "the most important synthesis of literary and historical theory produced in our century." White, surprisingly in view of his Marxist leanings, seems to endorse Ricoeur's view of history-writing as serving "the moral meaning of humanity's aspiration to redemption from history itself."

May I conclude with a quotation: "The problem may be not how to get into history but how to get out of it. And in this respect, modernism in the arts may be less a regression to a pseudo-mythic condition of consciousness than an impulse to get beyond the myth-history distinction, which has served as the theoretical basis for a politics that has outlived its usefulness, and into a post-political age insofar as politics is conceived in its nineteenth-century incarnations." It seems to me a pity that White does not include Marxism among those political incarnations. Surprisingly, White welcomes Jameson's formulation of a completely utopian Marxism based on old-fashioned materialism. It contradicts the title of White's professorship. He must be the only "Professor of the History of Consciousness" in the whole world, and he, I'm afraid, in recent writings seems more and more to abandon the basic philosophical assumption of that very term.

RENÉ WELLEK

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DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

HISTORY, TRUTH, LIBERTY: SELECTED WRITINGS OF RAYMOND ARON. Edited by Franciszek Draus, with a memoir by Edward Shils. University of Chicago Press. $34.95.

It is both daunting and dangerous to write a review of Raymond Aron's work. Here is a figure who wrote hundreds of journalistic articles for *Le Figaro, l'Express, Commentaire,* an equal number of articles and essays for professional journals, and several dozen books, at least some of which, starting with *The Opium of the Intellectuals,* helped to shape post-World War Two thinking. As E.A. Shils stated, "No academic of this century—certainly no academic social scientist, with the possible exception of John Maynard Keynes—was so widely known and appreciated as Raymond Aron." Certainly, no other social scientist has been so universally honored in his lifetime. At the time of his death in October 1983, he had received as many emoluments and awards as he had book titles to his credit—no easy feat even in this age of easy academic celebration. Yet, even for those who admired him, questions remain as to the lasting nature of his intellectual achievement, and whether it is equal to his political acumen or moral probity.

History, Truth, Liberty is the second collection of Raymond Aron's essays to appear recently. The first, *Politics and History,* was published several years earlier. A third collection of essays, promised for this year, is to be called *Sociologists, Power and Modernity.* Doubtless, still others will follow.

The reason for this posthumous outpouring, I would argue, apart from his towering importance as a scholar, is Aron's qualities as an essayist. For he is stylistically as much a child of Montaigne as of Tocqueville substantively. Each of the twelve essays in this volume, for example, contains more or less well-defined examples of pitfalls to be avoided if not always paths to be followed.

So much was Aron an essayist, even a journalist in the best sense of the word, that a large-scale effort, such as *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations,* was less than successful. Details drawn from the current events of the late 1950s and early 1960s kept getting in the way of Aron's Clausewitz-like effort at synthesis. In part this is due to Aron's innate liberalism that was far deeper than any imputed conservatism. In any context other than France, this

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would readily have been recognized. But in an ideological environment often defined by the polarities of an abstracted Marxism and a crude if concrete Gaullism, Aron's essentially prudent and mediating efforts seemed an alien and intrusive force in French politics. But liberalism entered into the sinews of his analysis, as when he notes in his essay "On the Morality of Prudence" that "we have tried to make the analysis of international relations independent of moral judgments and metaphysical concepts"—in other words, apart from the very linkage that is the shank of all conservative ideology.

It is important to have these selections from the work of Aron, if for no other reason than to rescue him from the iconographic tradition to which he is increasingly subject. Essays and introductions on Aron's thought tell us a great deal about his dedication to French national interests and to Judaic tradition, his indomitable will in the face of personal misfortune, public obloquy, his *pessimiste jovial* and his *optimiste triste*. But in this display of necrophilia it is all too easy to lose sight of the actual themes to which Aron repeatedly returned; the strengths that made him such a powerful moral voice; and, alas, the weaknesses that made him more widely renowned as commentator than as synthesizer.

The core of *History, Truth, Liberty* is less concept-oriented than people-saturated. Thus, in the essay "Tocqueville and Marx" we are given the brilliant insight that a "purely political revolution, one that does not modify the social infrastructure, does not allow man to realize himself because it confuses the genuine man with the worker locked into his particularity and because man is in conformity with his essence . . . . " Aron comes down on the side of democratic liberalism; the trinitarianism of bourgeois citizenship, technological efficiency, and the right of every individual to personal choice. The struggle between liberal democracy and socialist construction is seen as an historical dialogue between Tocqueville and Marx. But this is a contemporary French reading of the past. In England, the same struggle was locked in the bosom of John Stuart Mill, who embodied both liberal and socialist principles. In Russia, different varieties and strains of socialist politics embodied this struggle over the goals of democracy, with well-known disastrous consequences. In the United States liberal and conservative struggles were conducted as if socialism were an exotic European import. This is not to say that Aron was wrong in his judgments, but that his formulations were all too often limited as well as informed by continental considerations.

The chapters analyzing the West and the East illustrate Aron's

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continentalism. Aron understands the ideological roots of the conflict, found in Soviet imperialism's aim to liquidate the democratic West. As long as this commitment to the inevitable destruction of the West remains the basic agenda as well as the telos of Marxism-Leninism, all notions of accommodation must be tempered by a dual realism: the dangers of nuclear conflict (which require appropriate technical responses) and the threats to Western survival (which require appropriate ideological responses). But it remains problematic that "the day the Soviets have the same right to read, write, criticize, and travel as Western nationals, the competition will have become truly peaceful." Even if such rights are granted, and the Soviet Union seems to be moving in that direction, the likelihood of peace breaking out is slender. For different interests often preempt similar ideologies. Here Aron's attempt at synthesis comes to a screeching halt.

But this is to draw attention to the weakest aspect of Aron's legacy. He is a political moralist par excellence. It is simply exhilarating to read Aron on the distinction between a philosophy of history and a theology of history in "Three Forms of Historical Intelligibility"; the role of the conduct of warfare, apart from the origins of a conflict or the diplomacy of a peace treaty, in producing the most far-reaching social consequences as in "The Intelligibility of History"; and the plurality of meanings and motives in real history in contrast to the monism of meaning in fanaticism disguised as the inevitable future, as in the great essay, "On False Historical Consciousness."

Even the essays on presumably sociological themes gathered in the fourth and sixth segments primarily are extensions of Aron's historical concerns rather than empirical research. Thus, in "Science and Consciousness of Society" Aron makes clear the distinction between fairness and objectivity, criticism and dogmatism, individual heroism and collective suicide. Throughout, the examples of Soviet history and Marxist historiography are sharply drawn. Moreover, the chapter, "Social Class, Political Class, Ruling Class" instructs us with scalpel-like precision and, quite properly, on the ambiguity of categories and the pluralities of meanings in real world contexts. And in the final segment, "Max Weber and Modern Social Science" we are told of the relativity of benefits and injuries, the richness of total history in contrast to the poverty of national chauvinism, the need for rationality in a universe dominated by irrational impulses. It is to Aron's credit that he sees the weaknesses in Weber's relativ-

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ism without claiming to have answered such questions as are raised in the Weberian corpus, without sitting on the "shoulders of a giant." Aron's modesty was as genuine as his ability to see the problem and to do so even if no answers were immediately forthcoming. For it is the essence of rationality, of his rationality at least, to see that problems of our time need the best efforts of rational people—even if rationality should lose out.

In reviewing Aron's essays, one is repeatedly confronted with the European conscience wrestling with problems of democratic liberalism. But it seems to me that Aron did so with an arsenal of ideas that was only half-full. Tocqueville and Weber are pitted against Marx and Lenin. In some strange way, however, it was the Anglo-American tradition, of which Aron was acutely aware (more in practical than in theoretical terms), that supported the answer to totalitarian regimes and systems. Aron's "West" had two components: the continental and the constitutional. The former he knew best; the latter applied his teachings best. On this anomaly Aron's work comes to rest. His great strength, and unique contribution, was to understand the striving for democracy, without resorting to theories that do little to promote it. In this, Aron was the true child of the French Enlightenment and the perfect critic of a German Romanticism that promised more of the spirit of freedom than it provided.

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

ISRAELI DILEMMAS

THE SIEGE: THE SAGA OF ISRAEL AND ZIONISM. By Conor Cruise O'Brien. Simon and Schuster. $12.95.
CONFLICTS AND CONTRADICTIONS. By Meron Benvenisti. Villard Books. $15.95.

What will the fate of Israel be? Is the State of the Jews condemned to a permanent situation of political isolation and military siege? Is Zionism—the national movement that brought Israel into existence—a phenomenon so different from other historical phenomena that it makes the State of the Jews as unique in contemporary international society as the Jews have been among the

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nations? And if so, does this uniqueness call for a "unique" solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict? These and many other questions are raised by the authors of these two books. They seem to confirm Churchill's belief that the emergence of the State of Israel is, for better or worse, the greatest event of the twentieth century. But even those who disagree with Churchill cannot remain indifferent to the multiple shocks created by the transformation of the Jews from individual objects into collective subjects of history.

Conor Cruise O'Brien is conscious of this fact. His book, he warns his readers, is a "highly personal" one. It could not be otherwise for one who has been a close observer during more than thirty years of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Yet only a politician of his experience, a diplomat of his international standing, and a journalist gifted with his stylish curiosity could have turned seven hundred pages of compressed Jewish, Zionist, and Israeli history into a book as captivating as a novel.

Brilliant style and an impressive grasp of facts are not the only merits of this *tour de force.* Although O'Brien does not conceal his sympathy for Israel, his knowledge of the Irish drama, so similar and yet so different from the Zionist one, allows him to look at the Arab-Israeli conflict from angles that are both new and thought-provoking. This becomes particularly clear when he analyzes the causes and consequences of "political overkill," a self-defeating practice that, from the endemic anti-Jewish feelings of the British administration in Palestine to the Israeli military arrogance in Lebanon, and passing through the irresponsible extremism of the Palestinian leaders from the Mufti of Jerusalem to Arafat, explains many of the "miraculous" reversals of situation that have paved the way to the present.

For example, "political overkill," as O'Brien observes, is apparent in the refusal of the Palestinian leadership to agree in the 1930s to participate in the consultative councils proposed by the Mandatory Government. Ironically, these councils, using numerical representation as a basis, would have confined the Jews to perpetual minority status in Palestine. Additionally, such short-sightedness or "overkill" is evidenced by the Palestinians' rejection, against the advice of Egypt and Iraq, of the partition plan proposed by the Peel Commission in 1937, which would have created an Arab state in eighty percent of Mandatory Palestine. Equally self-defeating in O'Brien's eyes was Britain's behavior towards Palestine in the 1940s, especially when compared with its actions towards Ireland in the

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1920s. A weaker postwar London government offered much stiffer resistance to the Jews' claim than to that of the Irish, despite the fact that the Zionists enjoyed stronger American support and greater local military strength than had the IRA twenty years before.

Using medical terminology, one could describe O'Brien's book as a morphological study of the Jewish national epic and Benvenisti's as an endocrinal analysis of the Israeli drama. An Israeli-born historian of the Crusaders, educated in the impassioned family and public atmosphere of socialist pioneering Zionism, a former kibbutz member and deputy mayor of Jerusalem in charge of Arab affairs, Benvenisti offers an unparalleled inside view of Israel through a painful, cruelly honest description of his personal experiences and moral dilemmas. These experiences are profoundly different from O'Brien's but no less rich in their insightful appreciation of events. Conversant as O'Brien is with both the Irish and Jewish situations, Benvenisti grew up in the intense ideological climate of the Yishuv, during the prestate Jewish community's obsessive search for roots. For him, as for so many other young Zionist leaders of the time, the transformation of the Diaspora's Holy Land—what Benvenisti terms the "geographia sacra"—into a tangible reality held a central place, as did the neopagan worship of "moledet," the idealization of the old/new motherland. The development of these ideas to their logical but self-defeating ultimate consequences, his allegiances to the Zionist dream in conflict with his strong personal friendships with Arab families—these descriptions make much of Benvenisti's biography fascinating and politically instructive reading.

One could, of course, object that the soul-searching of a member of the socialist pioneering elite, now dispossessed of power by a growing populist nationalism in what Benvenisti calls a "narcissist society," is by no means peculiar to Zionism. It is not by chance that the social group to which Benvenisti, albeit the scion of a long-established Sephardi family, belongs has been labeled "the Israeli WASPs," the term standing (according to the Israeli context) for "White Ashkenazi (European) Sabra (native-born) of Pioneering parentage." This group, far smaller and less homogeneous than its American counterpart, is certainly a dying species which, understandably, feels it is "too painful to admit that they have no answer or solutions for problems confronting them and Israel." Yet, there is an element of suicidal passion in these Israeli WASPs if they indeed now view themselves as a people who "hold a passport of a country which does not exist."

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Benvenisti is deeply disturbed by the degree of animosity generated among the North African and Asian immigrants towards the paternalistic egotism of the European Socialist Zionist elite. But even more is he shocked by the moral and political consequences of the unexpected passage of a growing number of hostile Palestinians under the rule of a Jewish society totally unprepared for such dominance. The 1967 war, he says, turned the original ethos and meaning of "moledet" from a "Jewish perception of the 'chosen people' crystallized against the background of humiliation, scorn, hate and alienation of the Diaspora" into the "sinister domineering significance" of the same precepts, but transferred into a situation "in which the Jews are the majority ruling another nation and the Zionist ideal of moral superiority of the Jewish state is replaced by a concept of superior moral claim based upon and justified by Jewish suffering."

The perception of the inevitable negative consequences of this transformation has made Benvenisti an outsider to both his own socialist elitist society and that—populist and expansionist—of the "new Israelis." It pushed him to devote time and thought to a meticulous study of the factual changes taking place in the occupied territories. This ongoing study has now become a classic ingredient of all political debates in Israel and, in light of the recent Palestinian troubles, a remarkable piece of political prophecy. The left sees in it the proof of the vital necessity of disentangling Israel from a corrupting colonial situation, while the right finds in it support for the success of the irreversible process of undeclared annexation promoted by the Likud governments. (It is currently believed that Benvenisti's study has also influenced King Hussein's decision to involve himself more actively in the search for a negotiated end of the Israeli occupation.)

O'Brien's forecasts for Israel are pessimistic, since he foresees in the future a long, protracted, almost indefinite state of siege. Benvenisti's analysis reaches even gloomier conclusions. Of course, both may be right. The worst can always happen. It would be unrealistic and irresponsible to underrate the dangers of a persistent Arab rejection of the Jewish state's right to exist, all the more so in a time when Moslem fundamentalism reinforces pan-Arabism's deep-rooted hostility towards Zionism. It also would be unrealistic and irresponsible to underestimate the corrupting influence of a colonial or semicolonial state of military administration on the Israeli democratic system, or the dangers facing the state in the wake of its

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transformation into a binational polity with a growing Arab population deprived of equal rights. Yet it would be equally wrong to search for solutions to these complex problems on the basis of past Western historical paradigms such as voluntary decolonization, negotiated international systems, legislated civil rights, and the like.

Even in our time of "accelerated history," the transformation of a group into an independent state is bound to disturb for a long time the existing "political ecology." The White House was burned down by the British decades after American independence had been formally won; it took seventy years and a half-dozen wars for Italy to become united and independent, centuries for Holland and Switzerland to adjust to the political environment created by their emergence as sovereign states. To think, therefore, that this rule of political ecology does not apply to Israel and the Middle East is illogical. The State of Israel may not last, but if it does, it will certainly not achieve sincere recognition, acceptance, and peace in this century, nor should it be expected to do so.

Both O'Brien and Benvenisti insist on the seriousness of the emergence of religious fundamentalism in Israeli society, a process which not only undermines the Zionist, socialist democratic institutions of the country but reinforces the tendencies towards nationalist expansionism. This perception is correct, but it cannot be conceived as a particularly Jewish phenomenon. Rather, it is part of the wider process of decolonization that makes Israel a political society closer, despite all the obvious differences, to Afro-Asian countries than to those of the West. One characteristic of the former colonial states is that the legitimacy of their governing elites, which brought about their countries' independence, is everywhere being challenged by the traditional religious or religion-linked elites, those who took little part and even sometimes fought against national independence. The reason for this challenge is that the groups who fought for and won the struggle for independence have adopted, consciously or unconsciously, the political ideologies, cultural habits, and institutions of their former colonial masters, ideas, and policies without which these now governing elites could not have won their battles. In so doing, these "Westernized" groups have estranged themselves everywhere, including Israel, from the traditions and cultural habits of the masses, over which the traditional religious elites claim a monopoly. This alienation allows the traditional elites, heretofore lukewarm if not antithetical to independence, to rise and demand their share of the political pie.

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The combination of nationalism and religion in Israel—as in Africa or Asia—cannot, therefore, be evaluated only by Western parameters. This does not mean that the pessimistic implications of both O'Brien and Benvenisti will not come true. It does mean that many political manifestations in Israeli society cannot be understood solely against a background of Western experience. Therefore, allowances must be made for the unexpected, which will be considered by some miraculous and by others absurd. The present existence of two rival executives within the framework of a "national unity" government is a case in point.

Finally, one must reflect on the possible consequences of the little perceived but potentially important conflict between "space" and "territory." The two concepts are usually confused and seen as overlapping. They have, however, profoundly different roles in Jewish history. Space is basically an abstract concept which can be defined in a variety of rational, ethical, religious, and mythical terms with little or no relation to reality. Territory, on the contrary, is a physical, geographical space, filled with solid content, idealized by folklore, ideology, and traditions.

For millennia Judaism and Jewish identity have been determined by time and space, not by territory. What makes a Jew a Jew is the calendar he lives by, not the land he lives on. Nothing is more significant in this sense than the prayer a Jew continues to recite three times a day to ask for rain or dew, according to the meteorological conditions of Palestine, irrespective of his living in snowy Russia or desert Africa. Furthermore, the places Jews did inhabit, the ghettos, shtetls, and mellahs of Europe, Asia, and North Africa, were spaces and not territories. It is instructive to recall that Vilna was known to the Jew as "Jerusalem of Lithuania." When, in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these Jewish spaces came into conflict with Europe's national territorial states, the consequences could not be but tragic in spite of formal guarantees of equality.

The great insight of the Zionist movement was to understand the deadly implications of this clash and to secure, out of sheer need for survival, a territory for at least part of the Jews. However, this momentous achievement has taken place at the very moment in which larger and larger segments of the industrialized world realize that it is precisely the mastery of time and space and not territory that promises the biggest economic and military returns. The resources of air and outer space, information systems, or, as the

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French call them, "structures informatiques," are the real power terminals for the future. Conversely, states that, though stretching over wide territories rich in natural resources, are bound to their lands by strong ideological, local, religious traditions, seem to be handicapped in their ability to adapt to change and modernity. Paradoxically, the Palestinians, whose loss of territory has weakened them politically and militarily in relation to the territorial Arab and Israeli states, are rapidly becoming technologically the most advanced and culturally the most open Arab society of the Middle East, precisely because of their transformation into a "space" nation.

It may be unrealistic and unfair to expect Israel to divest itself of the territorial achievements and psychological complexes absorbed in forty years of recovered sovereignty. Yet, it would be equally irresponsible and unjust not to take into account the fact that Israel is probably one of the states most fit to adapt itself to, and thus take advantage of, the opportunities and challenges of time and space.

Siege and conflicts notwithstanding, O'Brien's and Benvenisti's lucid appraisals of Israel's contradictions open many more pathways of promise than they are ready to admit.

DAN V. SEGRE

NEW GERMAN WRITING

RECENT WRITING IN THE GERMANIES, AUSTRIA, AND SWITZERLAND. By Peter Demetz. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. $27.95.

In the preface to Peter Demetz's useful but ultimately disappointing survey of recent writing in German, the author states that he is not interested "in writing a literary history in the older tradition, rich in bibliographies and poor in value judgments." Unfortunately, despite his often noble assessments and compelling subject matter, he has done just that.

It would be easy to forgive Demetz's failure at a task that from the very outset would seem not only monumental but almost impossible: namely the formation of a clearheaded understanding of a literature divided by four countries, two superpowers, numerous

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dialects, and the tragic aftermath of World War II. However, what is so frustrating about *After the Fires* is that at the end of its four hundred pages we are left with no better understanding of the deep-seated reasons behind the turns that German literature has taken. It would seem that Demetz's crucial error in trying to formulate a consistent theory to account for the breadth and turmoil unique to German writing lies mostly in his reluctance to ask the simplest of questions: Why?

The book's most interesting chapter by far is that on the literature of the Holocaust. Here Demetz not only offers compelling insights into the complexity of taking any kind of academic stance towards such suffering; he also illuminates the central problem the survivors had to ask themselves about the choices open to them in reconstructing their literature and the very language with which it was written:

> We asked ourselves whether it would not be nobler to be inarticulate in another language rather than articulate in German—whether we should escape into and adopt Czech, Polish, Yiddish, or Hebrew, or go on, against all reason, to cultivate German in a secret act of basic resistance, believing that we were the true speakers, as long as we were able to speak at all, and that the killers were infecting, misusing, raping a pure idiom.

As Demetz points out, there were almost as many different answers to the problem as there were writers. However, what is important is the dilemma itself and the pressure it brought to bear on anyone writing in German, for, as the author subtly observes: "If it is difficult to form an English sentence about what happened, it is still more difficult in German."

Such acute thinking is precisely what is lacking in the rest of his book. Although Demetz's catalogues of the important and influential texts of the last three decades would be useful to any student or bookstore browser, he relies too much on simple plot summaries rather than close readings. Chapters devoted to single authors such as Thomas Bernhard, Max Frisch, Günter Grass, and Peter Handke fare a little better, but even here he fails to penetrate to the deeper cultural complexities that make a Swiss writer Swiss, or what an Austrian's relation might be to the empire's long history. Instead, Demetz chooses to devote separate chapters to cultural background while elsewhere mixing writers from the four countries under the general headings of poetry, drama, and fiction.

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The uneven nature of his prose also contributes to Demetz's apparent refusal to take a convincing stance. Numerous plays, poems, and novels are served up merely with the generic "remarkable," while at other times his forms of praise border on the ridiculous. Describing Handke's play, *About the Villages,* Demetz commends it by obliquely stating that it "touches a nerve of the age and paradoxically fascinates by its combination of ideological mush and occasional poetic energy." Similarly, in summing up a novel by Adolf Muschg, he describes it as "a highly intimate, disturbing, cryptic, and largely uneven book in which bold psychological and social analysis has not entirely pushed aside his readiness to please the reader, at least in passing, by predictable situations and Swiss stock characters." Meanwhile, it would be nice to know what the book is really like.

It is sad that *After the Fires* is not more stimulating. That Peter Demetz chose not to write an intricate book of high-powered literary criticism is not the source of the disappointment; it is rather the slackness of his approach to some of the vital questions still facing German writers. His sensitivity to the role of language in culture and history would seem to qualify him for the undertaking, but it is a role only fleetingly addressed in this book. That German literature has survived and prospered is amply demonstrated by the integrity and inventiveness of the writers catalogued, but whether it is a literature of unity or a literature of division is still something which needs to be answered.

PETER FILKINS

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It was a Thursday when I lifted the phone and called my agent. I said, "Gabe, I'm going to be sixty-six tomorrow, Friday, January 13, 1978, and I've been writing fiction all my life and no one's ever published a word of it and I'd give my left pinkie to get into *The Paris Review*." And I did because Gabriel was interested at once and told me that he'd get in touch with me the next day because he thought he might find a buyer. He did. . . . When my story came out, I went to Dr. Dodypol and had the finger removed surgically and under anesthesia. His head nurse, Kate Crackernuts, wrapped the finger in cotton bandages and in red tissue paper with a yellow ribbon around it and I walked out a published author and weighing three ounces less than when I walked in.

—Dallas Wiebe, "Night Flight to Stockholm," Issue 73

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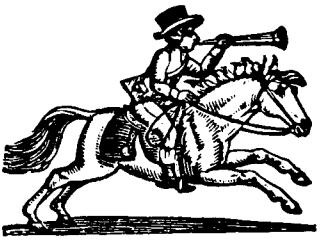

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